

BATHO PELE REVITALISATION PROGRAMME AND SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

By

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ABSTRACT

The introduction of the *Batho Pele* (BP) White Paper in 1997 sought to provide a policy framework and practical strategy aimed at improving access to public services towards an efficient, effective and development oriented Public Service. The study aimed at exploring the extent to which the Public Service; in particular the Department of Public Service and Administration referred to in this study as “the *DPSA*”, has implemented the *Batho Pele* principle of Redress. *Batho Pele* (Sesotho word for People First) aspires to portray the public service as government machinery that is citizen-oriented, informed by the eight principles of Consultation, Access, Service Standards, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.

The challenges highlighted by this study demonstrated that the mechanisms and measures put in place in support of the implementation; monitoring and feedback of the *Batho Pele*; in particular the principle of “Redress”; as a focus of this study; are not yet responsive to complaints handling processes and procedures in dealing with citizens’ dissatisfactions when interfacing with government during the delivery of services. Literature review and the empirical evidence in the study demonstrated the need for managers to view complaints and demands for redress by beneficiaries as valuable learning opportunities to come up with preventative and corrective measures to service delivery problems within the public service.

The Redress procedures and systems which are critical for fairness, courtesy, openness and transparency and sustainability still need to be designed better; well co-ordinated and collaborated to ensure sustainable implementation of complaints handling mechanisms and system within the public service. This would include formal recognition for beneficiaries, their right to information about government decision-making and spending patterns, and rights to seek redress for poor-quality service delivery.

The methodology and the findings of the study with the *DPSA* as a focus area, highlighted the following as critical ingredients towards sustainable implementation, monitoring and feedback of the “redress principle”, within the public service.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (Public and Development Management) to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Kebeile Veronica Motalane

February 2014

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my husband, Dr Paul Motalane, who taught and instilled in me that perseverance, hard work, dedication and commitment pays; and to my children, Phemelo, Omolemo and Bogosi, who supported and encouraged me to complete my degree.

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Thank You

Kebeile Veronica Motalane

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DPSA:	Department of Public Service and Administration
OPSC:	Office of the Public Service Commission
<i>BP</i> :	<i>Batho Pele</i>
SMS :	Senior Management System
IPSP :	Integrated Public Service Support Programme
PAJA :	Public Administration Justice Act
PAIA :	Promotion of Access Information Act
RDP :	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SDOT:	Service Delivery and Organisational Transformation
HRMD:	Human Resource Management & Development
PSICT:	Public Service

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The introduction of *Batho Pele* (BP) White Paper in 1997 sought to provide a policy framework and practical strategy aimed at improving access to an efficient, effective and development oriented Public Service. The study aimed at exploring the extent to which the Public Service; in particular the Department of Public Service and Administration referred to in this study as “the *DPSA*”, has implemented the *Batho Pele* principle of Redress. *Batho Pele* (Sesotho word for People First) aspire to portray the public service as government machinery that is citizen-oriented, informed by the eight principles of Consultation, Access, Service Standards, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.

Citizens are more interested on how satisfactory and effective the assistance and support received are in dealing with problems that may arise when interfacing with government at the point of service delivery. Increasingly South African citizens are using protests as a tool to obtain redress for their service delivery complaints and grievances. The challenges highlighted by this study demonstrated that the mechanisms and machinery put in place in support of the implementation; monitoring and feedback of the *Batho Pele*; in particular the principle of “Redress”; are not yet responsive to complaints handling processes and procedures in dealing with citizens’ dissatisfactions when interfacing with government during the delivery of services.

Literature review and the empirical evidence in the study demonstrated the need for senior managers to view complaints and demand for redress by beneficiaries as valuable learning opportunities to come up with responsive mechanisms to deal with service delivery problems within the public service.

The Redress procedures and systems which are critical for fairness, courtesy, openness and transparent need to be designed better; well co-ordinated and collaborated by senior managers among others, to ensure sustainable implementation of complaints handling mechanisms and systems within the public service. This would include formal recognition for beneficiaries, their right to information about government decision-making and spending patterns, and rights to seek redress for poor-quality service delivery.

The methodology and the findings of the study, pointed out the important elements towards sustainable implementation; monitoring and feedback of the “redress principle”, within the public service. These include the extent to which complaints handling mechanisms and redress are in place and implemented in various branches of the *DPSA*, how these mechanisms are formalized, known, popularised and used by the recipients. Lastly, how the complaints are monitored and reported to ensure successful implementation, best practices captured, disseminated and shared within the public service.

The study highlighted the following building blocks as critical in dealing with redress within the public service to ensure citizens satisfaction:

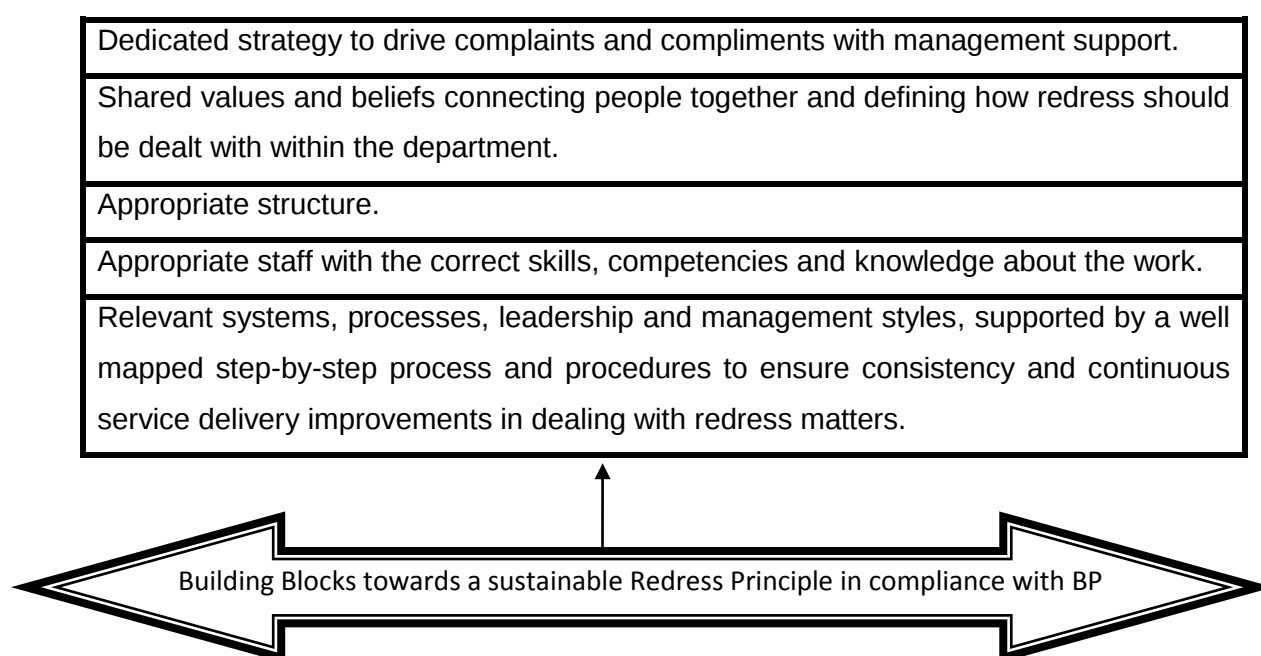


Figure 1: Building blocks of *Batho Pele* Redress Principle (source: researcher)

The study concluded by recognising the significance of the following organisational dimensions as integral parts of redress and complaints handling to ensure citizens satisfaction in dealing with complaints namely; timeliness, facilitation, apology, credibility, and attentiveness (Davidow, 2000).

Recommendations include the need to prioritise ongoing orientation and training of both the internal staff and the citizens on the redress machinery to effect the redress principle in the delivery of services based on trust, outcomes and satisfaction to all. These will also contribute towards continued orientation of senior managers and building up the literature and research on redress.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Introduction

The South African Government has, since 1994, put in place legislative frameworks and policies aimed at transforming the public service. These include the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, (1997), which aimed at advancing one of the eight transformational priorities; namely “**Transforming Service Delivery**”.

Transformation is aimed at rendering the public service capable of redressing the injustices of the past, extending its services to the majority of South Africa’s people who continue receiving inadequate services despite almost twenty years into democracy. The public service therefore had to become more efficient, economic and effective at the same time as it radically expanded its reach and changed its ethos.

Institutionalising *Batho Pele* principles within the public service is one of the service delivery fundamentals of the South African Government. The Redress principle as a focus of this study, is one of the initiatives of government seeking to provide an environment for “public servants to be service oriented, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous improvement whilst allowing beneficiaries opportunity to hold public servants accountable for the type of services they deliver”; Batho Pele Handbook, (2003:8).

Most factors for redress emerging and mentioned in the literature review and the government reports utilised in this study are subsumed by the Redress and complaints handling Mechanisms and procedures in the *Batho Pele* Handbook (2004) and the White Paper on *Batho Pele* (1997), and these will be used mostly as the basis for this study.

Informed by the research topic, **Chapter One** provides the reader with a brief understanding of the background to the research, definition of the problem statement and research question, the objectives, the scope and the structure of the research report detailing the structure of the research report explaining each chapter as well as the concluding remarks.

The Department of Public Service and Administration “the *DPSA*”, as one of the government departments, should put in place and practice complaints handling systems in compliance with the redress principle of *Batho Pele*.

The research explored the implementation of the principle of “Redress” by selected senior managers within the *DPSA*, as one of the eight principles of the *Batho Pele* Policy document aimed at driving the transformation agenda of the public service since 1997. Other *Batho Pele* Principles include Consultation, Access, Service Standards, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.

1.2 Purpose of the Research Statement

The purpose of this research study is to explore the extent to which the Government departments have implemented the “Redress” through effective and efficient complaints handling mechanisms in line with the *Batho Pele* Principles, using the *DPSA* as a focus area. The study is significant in that it will further the understanding and knowledge of the redress principle; models and mechanisms for best practices and sharing of lessons learnt with a view to improve implementation and service delivery to all.

1.3 The Context of the Study

The introduction of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service: *Batho Pele* (1997), aimed at transforming the South African public service in totality, post the Country’s 1994 Democratic elections. The *BP* White Paper reflect government’s intention to adopt a citizen-oriented approach to service delivery improvement and is informed by the eight principles of Consultation, Access, Service Standards, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress and Value for Money.

Fifteen years since inception and implementation, there are still challenges and unevenness in the implementation of the *Batho Pele* Principles. The general perception in some instances supported by studies like those of the Public Service Commission, *DPSA*, and recent service delivery protests suggest that departments still need to do more by providing the required support among others to realise the intended benefits of the *Batho Pele* Principles.

The emphasis and focus on the “Redress Principle” out of the eight, was motivated by the perception that, the citizens’ dissatisfaction with the public service delivery may be triggered in some instances by the non-availability of the required mechanisms to protect their rights to redress if the services provided are not in line with the expected and/or promised standards as set out in the White Paper on *Batho Pele*.

In the instances where the redress mechanisms are in place to address citizen’s dissatisfaction, they seem not to be effective and are likely to be less resourced in terms of finances and personnel with appropriate skills and knowledge, as well as supported by relevant processes, systems and technologies to ensure sustainability thereof. The Presidential hotline programme is one such example of a redress mechanism that is expected to deal with citizens’ dissatisfaction by ensuring that responsible senior managers across the public service respond accordingly to the lodged complaints.

The complaints handling viewed as fundamental to the application of the redress principle, is expected to be undertaken with sympathy and positive response to the beneficiary within the public service. The findings of the Public Service Commission report on the Evaluation of Performance and Compliance with the *Batho Pele* Principle of Redress (2006) confirmed the above when highlighting that most departments and programmes sampled do not have formal complaints handling mechanisms in place. Where attempts are made to have redress, mechanisms used are in most cases not provided the requisite support to ensure effective implementation.

The report further indicated that there seemed not to be standardised formal mechanisms in place to enable the prompt provision of informative and helpful responses in handling complaints brought by the beneficiaries. The questions raised in this research is that, has the *DPSA* as one of the center policy departments responsible for coordinating and facilitating Batho Pele within the public service, put in place complaints handling mechanisms to deal with complaints or compliments lodged by its beneficiaries in compliance with the redress principle? If **YES**, how effective are these, and what are the lessons; if **NO**, what measures are being taken to ensure compliance sustainability in this regard?

The study is based on the assessment of the implementation of the Batho Pele principle of “Redress” in the *DPSA*. The problem statement, literature review, methodology and the research design proposed for this study aimed at exploring the implementation of the redress principle guided the research questions with a view to come up with recommendations to improve implementation.

1.4 Problem Statement

Despite the different initiatives and improvement mechanisms put in place since inception to support the implementation of the *BP* Policy fifteen years ago, beneficiaries continue to show dissatisfaction with regard to responses they get when complaining about the service provided. Dissatisfactions are demonstrated through service delivery protests by community members, unsustainable programmes and campaigns with no value for money. The Government programmes and mechanisms developed to support implementation, monitoring and reporting on the *BP* principles in particular redress, are yet to achieve the desired results.

The general perception, supported by desktop reports and literature review undertaken during this research, and the researcher’s experience as a senior manager within the public service, support the notion that more work still needs to be done in support of implementation in positioning *BP* as a strategic policy towards service delivery improvement. The Redress principle highlights the

importance of putting in place formal and systematic processes to institutionalise compliance by developing and maintaining a complaint management system.

The previous research undertaken on the redress principle, suggests that, despite mechanisms and programmes put in place to support implementation, the results have not been satisfactory. The identified challenges range from citizens' protests, uncoordinated efforts likely to cause duplications and wastage, insufficient management support, minimal resource allocations, lack of or ineffective staff training, coupled with staff shortage and the inability to leverage on information technology to support and/or strengthen delivery.

The findings in this regard suggests that more work still needs to be undertaken to develop, maintain and integrate complaints handling into the broader service delivery implementation to give effect to the Redress principle within government departments and the DPSA in particular. Although managers in the public service agree on the importance of compliance with the Redress principle and its centrality towards service delivery improvement, leadership support, which is crucial to successful implementation, is still uneven or, in some instances, non-existent.

Senior managers, as part of the management stakeholders, are expected to take into account and respond to, among others, the complaints of citizens' in the service delivery value chain to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Despite the above, most senior managers within the public service including those of "the *DPSA*" as a focal point; seem not to have formal measures in place to guide consistent implementation of the Redress principle by putting in place measures like standardized complaints handling systems.

There seems to be no overarching strategy towards a uniform approach to complaints management in the Public Service, in most cases, unsupported mechanisms, where available, are merely to comply with the policy requirements. The integration of and consistent use of the Batho Pele Principles within the complaints and redress process, implementation, monitoring and feedback to the citizens remains a challenge among most senior managers as policy drivers and implementers.

The non-integration of principles in this regard includes:

The inability and challenges to integration of the consultation principle with both internal (officials) and external stakeholders (citizens, NGOs, and so on) to engage and create awareness of the complaints handling and redress mechanisms available.

The provision of **Information** utilizing various relevant tools regarding complaints and redress mechanisms within the department, the operations and feedback process thereof, remains a challenge. **Openness and transparency** in dealing with the complaints and redress mechanisms, the establishment thereof, its operations, advocacy thereof, including maintenance and the feedback to give effect to the redress principle.

What are the **courtesy** tools and techniques integrated in the complaints and redress to ensure that the beneficiaries are treated in a courteous and humane manner to advance the ethos of Batho Pele and Ubuntu? What are the **access** mechanisms towards quality services and the **Redress** put in place to deal with the complaints and/or compliments from the service beneficiaries?

Are the mechanisms put in place for the redress in service delivery provided effectively, efficiently and in the most economic manner to ensure **value for money**? Lastly, what are the **service standards** for the redress mechanisms put in place by departments? These include the process undertaken towards the establishment of these standards, the awareness measures put in place to ensure that beneficiaries are aware of redress standards and they can hold the departments, especially senior managers, accountable, and so on.

The implementation, monitoring and reporting on the complaints handling system in dealing with Redress requires high level co-ordination and facilitation of multiple complex and yet essential roles and responsibilities informed by the structure and service delivery model of the organization, among other things.

There is a need to explore the extent to which national and provincial departments have put in place the complaints handling mechanisms in support to the compliance with the Redress principle as required by the White Paper on Service Delivery.

This study therefore, seeks to explore the extent to which senior managers within the *DPSA* are implementing the redress principle. These will include the challenges experienced in this regard, lessons learnt and best practices, if any, and the sharing thereof in support of implementation. The findings and analysis of the study will assist senior managers in the *DPSA* to have a better understanding of the problem and recommendations to improve on implementation and monitoring based on their environment.

1.5 Research Questions

This research study was guided by the following primary research questions which seek to determine the extent to which the redress principle is implemented within the *DPSA* as well as the tools and mechanisms in place in this regard:

Are senior managers within the DPSA implementing the Redress Principle in compliance with Batho Pele?

What are the tools and mechanisms supporting implementation thereof to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services?

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are to:

To find out the extent to which the managers within the *DPSA* are implementing redress principle through complaints handling mechanisms in compliance with the *Batho Pele* principles to ensure citizen satisfaction with services delivered;

To explore the tools and mechanisms put in place to enable the *DPSA* to fully co-ordinate and integrate the departmental complaints handling processes to redress and deal with citizens' dissatisfaction with service delivery; and

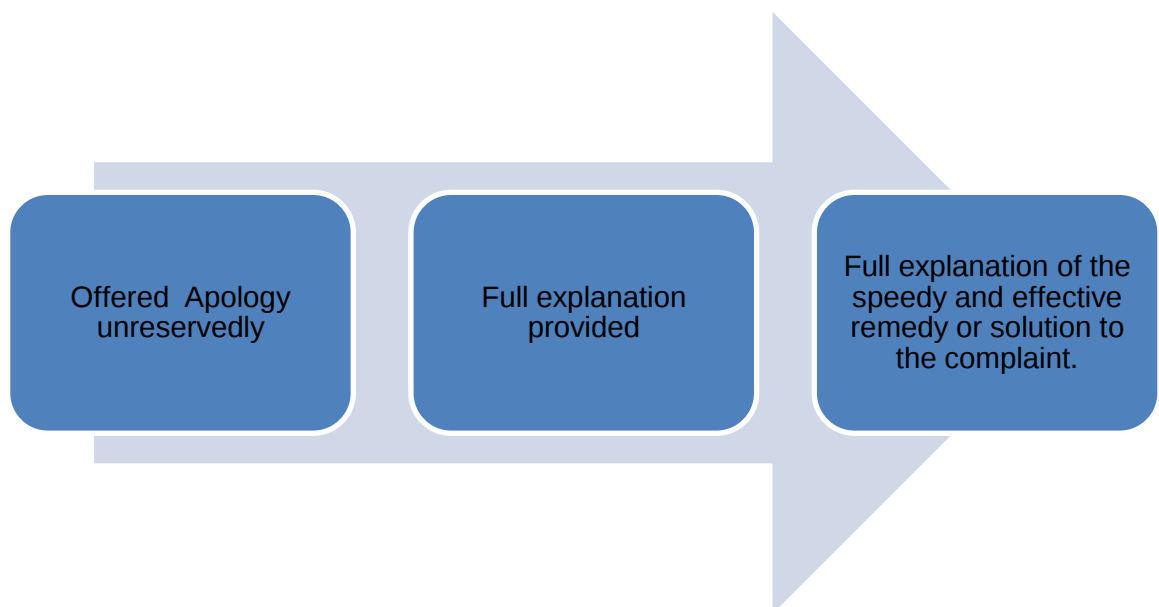
To provide recommendations and contribution towards continued orientation of senior managers and building up the literature and research on redress.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The study was conducted in the *DPSA*. Senior managers across the public service including the *DPSA* have the responsibility to integrate and implement the redress principle of *Batho Pele* (*BP*) within the Public Service. The *DPSA* as one of the centre departments, is perceived as the custodian of *Batho Pele*, and as such, is mandated to provide mechanisms, frameworks and guidelines to national and provincial administrations to support policy implementation, including *Batho Pele*, within the public service in this regard.

The major focus of the study is on the Principle of “Redress” which is one of the eight principles of the *Batho Pele* Policy. The “Redress principle” puts emphasis and attention on mechanisms that need to be in place when a citizen would like to complain in the event services have not been delivered, according to the expected and promised standard. The principle under study aims at improving service delivery by providing systematic processes to redress to ensure citizen satisfaction with the public services delivered. In doing so, it needs to take into cognizance the satisfaction and/or compliments of the beneficiaries with the services provided by the department.

The **White Paper: 1997** on *BP* demand the following as recourse to the beneficiary:



(Figure 2: Process towards *Batho Pele* redress as adapted from White Paper: 1997)

Senior managers, as part of the main drivers of implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback within the service delivery value chain, are expected to integrate the complaints handling mechanism within their area of work. Redress as one of the eight *Batho Pele* principles, requires a systematic and clearly defined process in the event where a service or product is not provided according to a promised and/or expected standard.

The White Paper, (1997), including some government service delivery reports by the OPSC, DPSA, and so on, showcases the need for the integration of redress within service delivery.

Figure 2 above indicates the process and logic to be followed by senior managers as key drivers in the event where the department (s) falls short of delivering according to expectations or as promised. In this instance, citizens and/or service beneficiaries should be offered an apology unreservedly and in a courteous manner.

An apology provided to a citizen and/or beneficiary should be followed by a full explanation of what actually happened with a view to provide broader information and an understanding of the problem. The *Batho Pele* principles of “Information, transparency and value for money” are critical in this regard.

Subsequent to an apology and explanation, a beneficiary and/or citizen should be given information of how the redress will be attended to. The information provided should include the speed at which the complaint will be resolved as well as what measures have been put in place to avoid the repeat and recurrence of the same complaint.

Although senior managers’ within government departments are expected to demonstrate their understanding of what is expected of them in terms of the redress principle, including its implementation, compliance and the quality of implementation in this regard, still remain a challenge. Effective compliance with the Redress Principle does not seem to be yielding the intended results within the department.

Apart from popular redress tools used by most of the senior managers, like suggestion boxes; circulars; e-mails and so on to improve compliance, the

department is still struggling to put in place a well-integrated and co-ordinated complaints handling system to ensure service delivery efficiency and effectiveness in compliance with the Redress principle.

The literature review undertaken and service delivery reports by some departments and oversight bodies read by the researcher, pointed out that most cases of citizen dissatisfaction with service delivery could have been resolved effectively, efficiently, on time to ensure continuous improvement in productivity, if the following key issues were ensured by senior managers:

Firstly, the complaints handling mechanisms and procedures should be established to deal with redress speedily and on time should a need arise.

Secondly; where complaints and redress mechanisms are in place, there should be advocacy and awareness to beneficiaries and/or citizens. This means that the beneficiaries and/or citizens should have the knowledge of how, when and to whom to complain and seek redress; and

Lastly, where the redress tools and mechanisms are developed, implemented and known to the service beneficiaries, measures should be put in place to ensure the functionality, efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility thereof in line with the defined standards.

1.8 Outline of the Research Study

The report of this research study which seeks to explore the extent to which the Redress Principle has been implemented in the DPSA is structured into five Chapters as follows:

CHAPTERS	KEY ISSUES
Chapter One	Introduction & Background.
Chapter Two	Literature Review.
Chapter Three	Research Methodology.
Chapter Four	Data Analysis.
Chapter Five	Conclusions & Recommendations.

(Figure 3 showing different study chapters)

1.9 Assumptions

This research study is based on the assumptions that:

Senior managers are conversant with the legislative framework and Conceptual framework of the *Batho Pele* principle of Redress and their expected role and responsibility in implementation, monitoring and reporting.

There are significant resources in place to support implementation, monitoring and reporting of *Batho Pele* and in particular the Redress Principle.

Senior managers would like exposure and more empowerment about the Redress principle as a mechanism to deal with citizens' complaints to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and satisfaction with the delivery of services.

1.10 Limitations

The limitations of the study are as follows:

The ability to ensure the balance between the "limited time expected for carrying out the study of this size"; limited focus scholarly material available; all these against the interest the study is likely to generate especially from the scholars of Public Administration and public servants may prove inhibiting.

The availability and willingness of the officials from the five branches within the *DPSA*, as a result of their busy schedules to participate in the research within the given timescale may affect the study.

The need to take into account the continued transformation nature of service delivery within the South African public service and the rapid changes, especially around the nature of the problem, maturity and empowerment of citizens, ongoing citizens' protests, and so on, may affect the findings, analysis and recommendations of a study of this nature.

1.11 Conclusion

The report of the research study with recommendations is envisaged to explore the extent to which the Redress Principle as one of the eight Batho Pele Principles is implemented and institutionalized within the Public Service, focusing in the DPSA is based on the different chapters as follows:

Chapter **One** provides the reader with a broad introduction and background to the study. The purpose in this regard is to provide the context which seeks to set a base for the content and the process that informed the sampling, methodology, data analysis and the recommendations made to improve on the implementation of the Redress principle within the *DPSA*.

Chapter **Two** explores the literature review which seeks to establish and provide the reader with the theoretical framework and context for the study. This covers the definition of terms and terminologies for common understanding of content and context by providing readings and possible models, reports, studies in support of the research study.

Chapter **Three** provides the reader with the research methodology used in this study. It outlines the research and sampling methods used in responding to the primary and secondary questions; the data collection techniques and procedures carefully considered given the sample size and scope to ensure the validity and reliability and the concluding remarks.

Chapter **Four**: seeks to provide the reader with the findings and analyses of the research study, in response to the primary and secondary questions guiding data collection. The data analysed and findings seek to provide a picture of the implementation of the Redress principle through effective and efficient complaints handling mechanisms within the public service, with specific focus to the *DPSA*.

Chapter **Five**: Conclusions & Recommendations provides the reader with the recommendations and conclusions in line with the purpose of the study which seeks to explore the extent to which the Redress principle has been implemented in the public service using the *DPSA* as a focus area.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction and background informing this study in Chapter One is followed by the intensive literature review as a basis for the empirical research. The literature review seeks to explore among other things, the availability of redress mechanisms and the measures put in place to institutionalize these to improve service delivery as envisaged by *Batho Pele*: 1997, and management's role and support in this regard.

It is important to note that, the literature review on redress and complaints demonstrated limited information, processes and systems accumulated thus far. It is only recently that researchers in this regard are beginning to entertain the possible development of the overall framework for measuring and managing organisational responses to complaints and redress.

The literature review in this study seeks to draw the different links together in an attempt to respond to the research question to a larger body of knowledge around complaints and grievance handling towards redress to enhance service delivery within the public service. It is further guided by the research objectives of assessing the extent to which the *DPSA* has implemented the complaints handling system in compliance with the Redress principle to improve citizen satisfaction within the public service.

The work undertaken is also enhanced with an historical review which is literature research traced since inception of *Batho Pele* and in particular, the implementation of the redress within the public sector by looking at the different reports, studies and engagements through focus groups, among others. The above also includes the need to provide possible mechanisms to enable the *DPSA* to fully co-ordinate the implementation of the departmental complaints handling system in compliance with the principle of Redress. These include a view on mechanisms and tools in place to support implementation, the shortfalls

and gaps thereof; and the lessons learnt with recommendations to ensure continuous improvement in dealing redress to citizens within the public service.

Most of the literature reviewed, information and knowledge around redress and complaints within the public service are mainly in the areas of government reports undertaken by the PSC, *DPSA*; national and provincial departments. The literature and government reports on Redress point to the challenges of the complaints and redress put in place by some departments in not being responsive to the citizens' complaints; and these in most cases, lead to citizen dissatisfaction.

Understanding of citizen complaints behaviour requires "problem identification" areas in order to rectify the complaints received. The complaints and dissatisfaction by citizens provide management with an opportunity to learn about service delivery challenges to ensure corrective measures with a view to ensure improvements. Redress processes and procedures are also critical to compensate for a service delivery transaction experienced by dissatisfied citizens and this requires a proper, systematic and effective complaints handling measure to respond accordingly (PSC Report, 2006, Bennett & Savani, 2011).

The implementation challenges highlight the need for strategic management approaches in dealing with redress and complaints procedures and processes within a department. This research took into account the main objective of public service complaint redress machinery which requires putting in place a systematic process to resolve complaints and grievances in an effective, efficient speedy and cost effective way taking into account the following key elements:



Figure 4: compliant handling process

The process in Figure 4 emphasises the need for senior managers within the public service to put in place a redress and complaints mechanisms that indicates how complaints are received, should a citizen be aggrieved during his/her interface with a department.

It is also critical to put in place systematic available mechanisms used by departments to register and receive complaints towards redress from a service beneficiary. Furthermore, what are the systematic processes and systems that are put in place to resolve the complaint after it has been lodged?

Lastly, what are the kinds of preventative measures that are put in place to avoid future recurrence? These should be based on, among others, lessons learnt and best practices to ensure sustainable preventative measures.

The significance of this study is encouraged by the perceived challenges faced by public servants, especially senior managers, to put in place a functional redress and complaints mechanisms towards service delivery improvement and citizens' satisfaction to ensure efficiency and effectiveness within the public service. The creation of internal and external checks and balances through effective redress mechanisms need to have institutionalised processes of making governance responsive and citizen friendly.

2.1 Key Considerations on Literature reviewed

The introduction of the White Paper on the Transformation of Service delivery, (1997) and *Batho Pele Handbook (2004)*, which form the base of this study; aimed at deepening the understanding and delivery of services through *Batho Pele* by providing practical implementation and thus bridging the gap between “knowing” and “doing” in the quest to mainstream BP within the public service.

The literature review undertaken in this study pointed out that implementation and the intended impact to the delivery of service within the public sector remains a challenge (*Batho Pele Hand Book, 2004* and *PSC Survey of Compliance with the Batho Pele Policy, 1990-2000*). Redress viewed as putting in place effective machinery to start the process of resolving and rectifying the

problem of a dissatisfied citizen (s), this include, dissatisfaction with a service not delivered and/or delivery made below the expected promised standard.

The *Batho Pele*, (1997), highlights redress to be triggered by the need to correct the situation of undelivered promised standard of service. In this regard among others, a citizen should be offered an apology, furnished with a full explanation as well as ways towards speedy and sustainable remedy. Redress therefore, could be viewed as the actions taken to re-establish the satisfaction of citizens when the expected service does not take place and thus leads to dissatisfaction.

Redress needs in the context of this study was undertaken in the perspective of regulatory expectations, response mechanisms and how to deal by challenges in this regard by senior managers within the public service. According to Diener and Greyser, (1978) redress can be viewed to as “fair settlement or fix”, it provides an opportunity to maintain better citizens-government relationship as well as a tool for citizens to feedback on the services provided to ensure continuous improvement and growth.

Redressing of complaints also serve as a vital citizens feedback mechanism that indicates efficiency and effectiveness which will contribute positively to continuous service delivery improvement. Such feedback among others, provide valuable space for remedial and preventive measures to reduce the complaint-prone can be put in place. The literature research on the Redress Principle, the historical data collected and analysed, suggest that very few departments have put in place an effective and efficient redress and complaint mechanisms. Among others, it provided broader perspective on the service delivery challenges experienced by the citizens when interfacing with government, and senior managers’ ability to put in place working response mechanisms to redress with effective and efficient machinery to ensure citizen satisfaction.

Furthermore, efforts are made through this review to look at redress implementation challenges; limited efforts in terms of research and studies for complaints and redress handling, role and efforts of senior managers in this regard. Literature highlights that, where the redress mechanisms are available;

they continued to be ineffective and/or not functioning according to the intended original thinking. (PSC report, 2006 & Service Delivery Transformation,1997).

2.2 Public Service Delivery Transformation Context

The South African Government has, within the context of public service reforms, introduced several legislations, policies, transformation programmes and initiatives to institutionalize the reforms within the public service since 1994. These initiatives introduced since 1994 which aimed at increasing value in the reform processes include; the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), White Paper on Service Delivery: *Batho Pele*, Public Administration Justice Act (PAJA), and Promotion of Access Information Act (PAIA). The Government has undergone a number of transformation processes aimed at making the public service critical machinery for taking the services to the people. The transformation processes has been marked by the following three distinct phases:

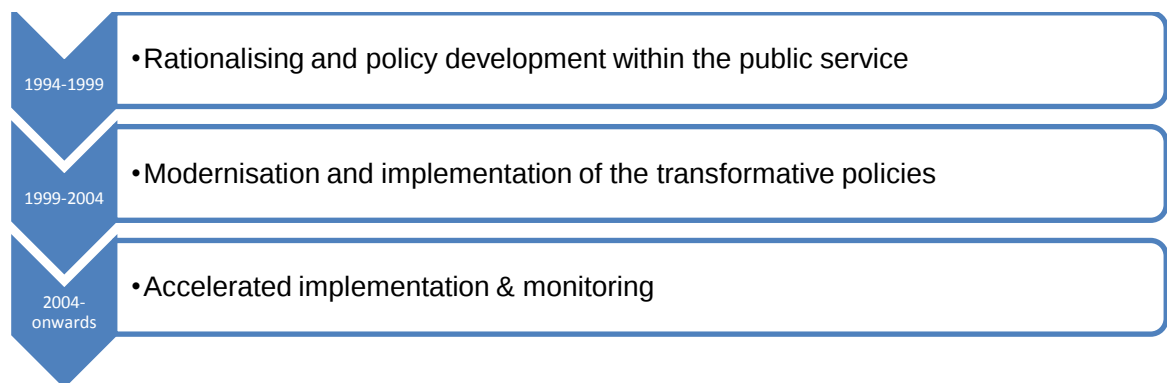


Figure 5: Transformation Phases adapted from PSC Report: (2008)

1994-1999: Rationalisation & Policy Development in the Public Service

The above period was marked by the deconstruction and reconstruction of the highly centralized public service which was driven from top-down, with low staff morale and low productivity among others. Massive rationalisation and transformation of the public service took place immediately during these years to unify the public services of the previous dispensation and replace it with progressive pro-poor democratic inclusion values and a professional ethos which put People First in the context of *Batho Pele*, among others.

1999-2004: Modernisation & implementation of transformed initiatives

The period from 1999 to 2004, was the phase of consolidation and implementation of various transformative policies to ensure continuous improvement in delivering services to all with *Batho Pele* cutting across and at the centre.

The focus during this phase was on strengthening the integration and coordination capability of the public service with more efforts geared to strengthening the centre of governance.

2004 onwards: Accelerated implementation & monitoring

Accelerated implementation phase sought to put into effect the different legislative frameworks, policies, and so on, aimed at taking quality services to the citizens.

This phase of 2004 onwards is marked by integration of the learning's from the past years of the democratic dispensation, strengthening and the inclusion of integrated new initiatives including the integration of planning through the National Development Plan, strengthened the monitoring and evaluation capability, appropriate sustainable tools and instruments to fight corruption and the professionalisation of the public service among others.

Value-Creation to enhance delivery & productivity in the public service

Batho Pele Principles, in particular **Redress**, strive to put in place measures to deal with complaints and failure in delivering services as per the promised and/or expected standard.

The value-creation, as depicted by Figure 6, relate to strategic issues that include, treatment of employees and citizens, integrity, good ethics and innovation guiding quality delivery to all (Thompson, *et al*, 2005: 21). The value creation elements mentioned below, therefore provide a yardstick against which to gauge the performance of policies, public institutions, informed decisions making, resource allocation, appropriate systems for delivery.

The developed value creation transformation initiatives within the public service continue to be supported by various regulatory frameworks, policies, programmes and other actions. Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012: 50-73, argues that value creation in the context of transformation is embedded in three fundamental components depicted in figure 6 which include **Outcomes**, **Services** and **Trust**.

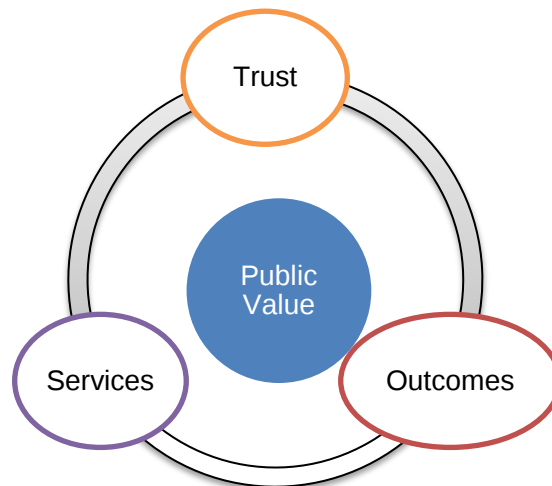


Figure 6 Public Value Creation Elements

Increased knowledge about services provides and passion as well as competencies of officials helps in strengthening citizens' trust and confidence in government. Redress and trust, are critical to element in service delivery, enhances transparency and openness. Citizens' satisfaction in redress is likely to have a positive effect on the trust and confidence in the government processes and the officials' especially senior managers in the context of this study.

The redress tools provide senior managers with an opportunity to restore and/or bring back citizens trust and confidence to government's ability to deliver service in line with the promised standard and/or expectations. It further promotes a way of thinking about the goals and performance of public policy whilst addressing fundamentals like ethos, equity, accountability, reporting with redress tools as central to continuous service delivery improvement. This includes the ability to apply proactive approaches and measures when dealing with redress complaints within the public service to strengthen citizen satisfaction on the outcome of the redress on the provided service(s) to ensure citizen satisfaction.

2.3 Revitalisation of *Batho Pele* Towards Service Delivery Improvement

Batho Pele Policy framework launched in 1997 is a service delivery approach introduced by the South African Government aimed at putting people first in providing quality services to all.

This policy framework puts emphasis on the delivery of quality services through continuous improvements through its visions, mission, strategic objectives informed by 8 *Batho Pele* principles and a belief set, as depicted in the following diagram adapted from IPSP Legacy: Lesson & insights in service delivery improvement emerging from Integrated Provincial Support Programme, 2009: DPSA:

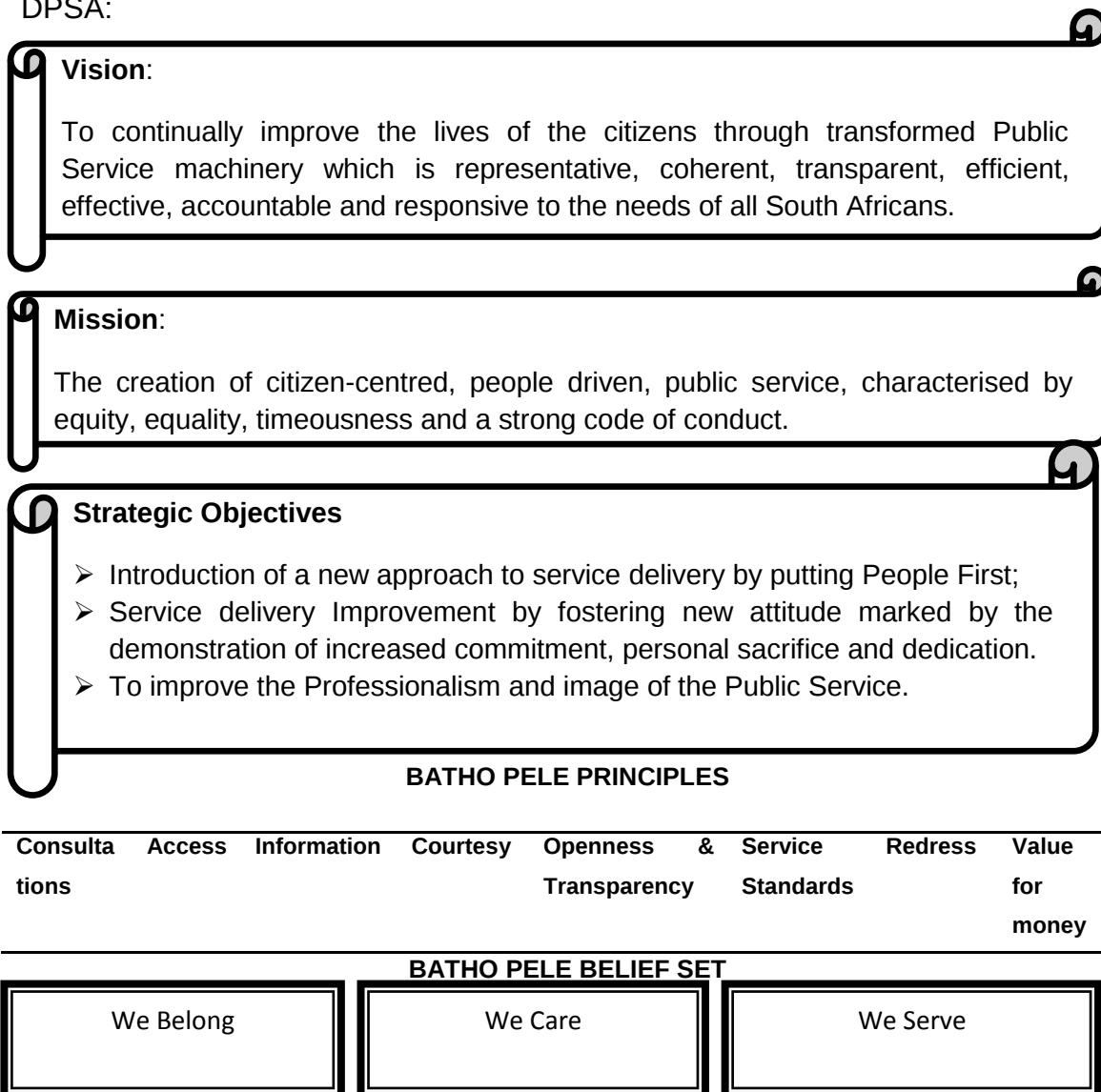


Figure 7: BP Vision, Mission, strategic objectives, principles and belief set (IPSP adapted)

Although the *Batho Pele* policy was introduced in 1997; its implementation, monitoring and impact remains to be realized. The findings of the 2004 Study on the compliance of *Batho Pele* conducted by the *DPSA* and *OPSC* in 2004 highlighted the different understanding and implementation of the policy across the public service. The study further revealed that most departments are still struggling with the implementation, monitoring and reporting on *Batho Pele*.

The literature review undertaken in this study supports the notion that the implementation of *Batho Pele* and support should form an integral part of the departmental work and not as an add-on to the delivery of core services. In this regard, Du Toit, *et al.*, (2002) and *Batho Pele Handbook*, (2004) caution that service delivery does not happen by accident; as a result, there has to be conscious and considerate putting in place measures and mechanisms to support implementation in this regard.

In order to strengthen the implementation, monitoring and reporting on *Batho Pele*, Cabinet approved a *Batho Pele* revitalisation programme to strengthen the implementation, monitoring and reporting towards the realization of the *Batho Pele* Policy's vision, mission, strategic objectives through the flagship projects informed by the following four themes:

Theme: One	Taking Public Service to the People
Theme: Two	Know Your Service Rights Campaign
Theme: Three	Putting People First For Real
Theme: Four	Mainstreaming & Institutionalising <i>Batho Pele</i>

FIGURE 8: FOUR THEMES FOR BATHO PELE REVITALISATION LAUNCHED 2004

The new vision of the revitalisation programme aimed at instilling the ethos of *Batho Pele* in order to internalise the pride and culture of *Batho Pele* in the public servants and should be demonstrated through their deeds and actions when carrying out their duties, expressed through the Belief Set as follows:

“We Belong Belief Set”:

This belief set call for the recognition of the importance of viewing and making every public servant the key provider of the Public Service and thereby feel that

they belong to a government which cares about them and values their well-being.

“We Care Belief Set”:

Urging public servants to showcase and demonstrate professionalism, courtesy and redress when interfacing and dealing with the beneficiaries and/or citizens by putting in place mechanisms to deal with their problems and complaints. These include treating them with utmost respect and dignity.

“We Serve Belief Set”

A call towards creating a better life for all by **Serving** those placed in our care with dignity, love and passion within the limited resources available and thus ensured value for money. These include going beyond the call of duty by public servants to provide quality services to all, even under challenging circumstances by embracing among others, innovative and smart ways towards sustainable service delivery.

Strategic initiatives like the IPSP played a strategic role as government service delivery improvement mechanisms aimed at institutionalising *Batho Pele* by strengthening the public service capacity of certain departments and provinces towards the achievements of service standards as agreed upon with communities.

The programme supported the effective and efficient implementation of the provincial growth and development strategies through strategic partnerships with provinces, donor communities, NGOs, CBOs and communities towards sustainable service delivery, good governance and poverty alleviation.

Batho Pele Principles and Explanation

The Batho Pele Principle aimed at bringing a different way of delivering service delivery by putting people first, can be summarised and explained as follows:

KEY PRINCIPLE	EXPLANATION
Consultation	Ensuring regular consultation with citizens about the level and quality of services provided with choices given about available services where possible.
Access	Establishing the appropriate terms of access for services and benefits is a critical determinant in whether or not services are highly valued by the citizens. This principle therefore, put major focus towards citizens' increased and equal access to the services which they are expecting in line with the published service standards and charters.
Information	Information is one of the critical determinants of building relationships between services and citizens. Citizens require information to be able to make a determination about government's activities and mechanisms to voice their feelings and opinions. Citizens require information to make sense of what is going on inside government and their participation to voice their opinions and perceptions in this regard, (Meijer, Curtin & Hillebrandt, 2012). The citizens are therefore entitled to be provided with full, accurate and appropriate information about public services they are entitled to and provided with.
Openness and transparency	Openness required restoring and/or maintaining citizens' trust in government among others, whilst transparency empowers them with the knowledge about government processes, structures and services. Transparency emphasises the "active disclosure of information by an organisation that enables external actors to monitor and assess its internal workings, decisions and performance (Grimmelikhuijzen and Welch, 2011: 94)

KEY PRINCIPLE	EXPLANATION
Courtesy	The treatment and consideration of citizens with courtesy, when providing services.
Redress	Redress procedures seek to address basic fairness for the citizens. The principle requires corrective measures for redress to be put in place with a view to remedy failures and complaints if a promised standard of service is not delivered.
Value for money	Ensuring value for money by providing the citizens with the best service in the most economic and effective manner.
SERVICE STANDARDS PRINCIPLE: Service Standards principle cuts across all the seven principles. Citizens are supposed to be informed about the level and quality of public services to be expected.	

(Table 1: 8 Batho Pele Principles: Batho Pele White Paper: 1997)

The implementation and internalization of the 8 (eight) *Batho Pele* Principles should be integrated into the delivery programmes, campaigns and training in terms of the content, context, processes and systems on how government interfaces with citizens in delivering quality services to all.

As a result, *Batho Pele*: 1997 as a policy intent of government aims at bringing about transformation across the public service through continuous service delivery improvement initiatives by putting “People First”. The continuous service delivery improvement in the context of *Batho Pele* should strive towards an effective and efficient easy access to service delivery points demonstrated through the availability of competent, knowledgeable and passionate public servants to service the citizens.

Accountability, commitment and dedication by all key stakeholders, documenting, packaging and sharing of lessons learnt, best practices as well as ongoing monitoring, feedback and reporting, ensure value for money and citizens’ satisfaction.

The improvement initiatives should also integrate the development, implementation and monitoring of an effective and efficient complaints and redress management processes and systems to ensure follow-up, responsive solutions and/or prevention of citizens’ grievances due to service failure.

At the centre of the improvements initiatives is the simplification of processes, systems and procedures, whilst using information technology as an enabler towards efficiencies, effectiveness, speed and value for money (*Batho Pele Handbook*: 2004).

It is critical to note that implementation, monitoring and feedback for continuous service delivery improvement require high level management and leadership buy-in and support. This also requires relevant Tools, Techniques, Frameworks, responsive technology to deliver faster and smarter as well as **redress mechanisms**, in the event of unmet promised/expected standard.

Furthermore, service delivery improvement initiatives like IPSP, Project Consolidate, and so on, also provided mechanisms for collection and analysis of citizens-compliant data on a regular basis to enable responsive redress measures.

Conclusion

Proper processes and systems to redress complaints will go an extra mile in assisting senior managers to understand citizens, their needs with a view to develop and implement responsive machinery to address their challenges. Senior managers as key stakeholders in the delivery value chain are required to integrate redress and complaints mechanisms in order to steer government actions in the right direction in addressing citizens' dissatisfaction due to service failures (Bourgon, 2007:1).

2.4 Definitions of key Concepts and Important Considerations

Redress

Redress is defined as a complaint handling mechanism and aims at providing a platform for service beneficiaries, both internally and externally, to voice their dissatisfaction or compliments with the service provided by the public service.

In order to give effect to the redress principle in the public service, there should be a transparent, accessible and well publicised complaints process and procedures that provide responsive solutions to dissatisfied beneficiaries and/or citizens for failure to deliver services according to the expected and/or promised standard.

Complaint

The *Batho Pele* Handbook, (2004) defines a complaint as “an expression of dissatisfaction with the public services whether justified or not”. A complaint is therefore a statement of unhappiness, where a service recipient is expressing discontent and/or unhappiness about a situation or service delivered not as expected.

In the context of the Public Service delivery, a complaint would therefore refer to an expression of dissatisfaction by a beneficiary or citizen and/or a group of beneficiaries or citizens about the level of service or lack thereof by a department or departments which may require responsive resolution and redress.

Such a complaint or dissatisfaction may be lodged through various mechanisms and platforms which may include, Walk in by the complainant, Hotline, call centre, telephone and/or office, Fax, e-mail, letter and/or call to the centre or office, Usage of technology which may include web based mechanisms; and Short Message System (SMS) and so on.

The complaints' handling mechanisms, therefore, reaffirm the significance of putting in place critical measures for redress and efforts towards reducing citizens' dissatisfaction with the service provided. The lodged complaints should

be handled with empathy, attentively, courteously and afforded sympathetic response from the service provider (Bennett and Savani, 2014: 201-210).

Service Standards

Service Standards as one of the 8 principles of *Batho Pele*, (1997) stipulates specific service delivery targets as defined and established by a department or organization. By design, service standards have an external and internal role. This means, **externally**, they are to be viewed by the public and/or citizens whilst **internally** serving as an instrument to holding departments accountable for the level of services delivered or not delivered.

As integral part of service delivery, the set standards are made up of minimum commitments that a department promises to meet and fulfill when delivering a particular service, taking into account the available resources. Of significance to the service standards is the key consideration and explanation that covers mainly what a citizen or service recipient can expect from a department or institution, how this service will be delivered in terms of “how, when and “who”; and a complaint mechanism explaining the process and procedure to be followed, should the service provided take place contrary to what was promised (White Paper on *Batho Pele*, 1997).

It is important to note that service standards are meant to alleviate ambiguity from the process and expectations whilst providing the beneficiaries with a set of commitments that can be used to hold officials accountable when evaluating the departmental performance. Meeting and/or exceeding of the set standards may translate to an increase in client satisfaction, improved public perception and overall department’s performance.

Co-ordination

Loegreid and Verhoest, (2010), based on Peters, (1998) are of the view that Coordination within the Public Sector context refers to the purposeful alignment of tasks and efforts or services responding to similar needs in order to achieve a defined goal. Efforts in this regard assist with the creation of greater coherence in policy and reduce redundancy, contradictions, within and between policies.

Strengthened coordination of various stakeholders in the service delivery value chain is critical towards effective and efficient service delivery implementation, monitoring, follow-up and reporting with complaints handling and redress to ensure citizen satisfaction.

2.5 Redress Towards Service Delivery Improvement

The *Batho Pele* principle of Redress highlights the need for service delivery improvements to be informed by the extent to which citizens become satisfied or not satisfied with the services promised or expected. Redress actions as part of the overall *Batho Pele* service delivery improvement value chain should be informed by a comprehensive model and/or mechanisms to identify the source of complaint and dissatisfaction by citizens as highlighted by Chi-Kuang Chen, An-Jin Shie, Chang-Hsi Yu, (2012: 786-792).

Davidow, (2000) identified effective redress management towards service delivery improvement to be based on the following six organisational dimensions responses to complaints. These include; timeliness, facilitation, apology, credibility, and attentiveness with redress dimension cutting across as depicted by the following diagram:

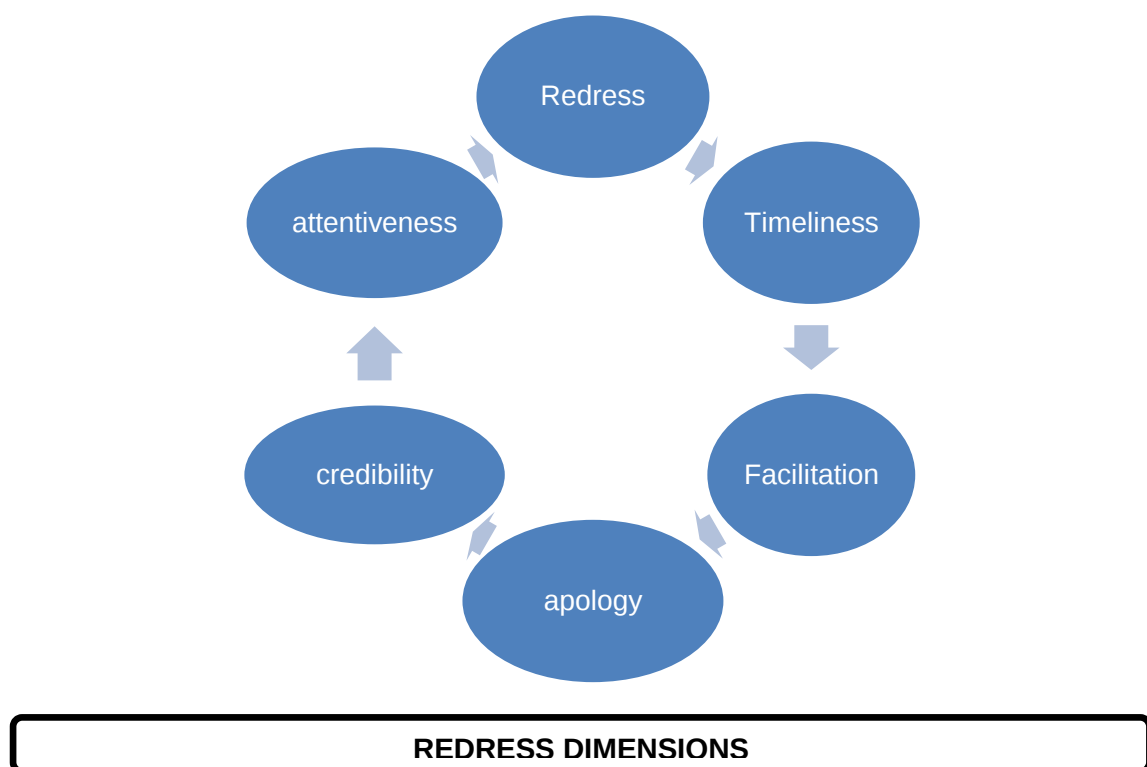


Figure 9: Davidow (2000) Organisational redress dimensions to complaints adapted

The *Batho Pele* policy requires government departments to build in redress mechanisms to deal with dissatisfactions and complaints which may arise as a result of unmet promised expectations.

The Complaints and redress response dimensions as highlighted by figure 9 adapted from Davidow, (2000) are critical in dealing with the redress and complaints in the event of service failure in service delivery and they should form the basis of senior managers integrated redress mechanism within their area of work. The above redress dimensions are summarised and explained as follows:

a) Timeliness

Timeliness, as one of the fundamental requirements in redress, refers to the speed at which the complaint, when lodged, is being addressed and/or dealt with. The time and effort involved for redress and complaints handling is important to the service beneficiary.

Speedy response in relations to the service rendered or provided could make a service beneficiary have a sense of being treated with empathy, courtesy, have a positive impact on the image of the department, based on the attention provided.

The following propositions are viewed to be critical when dealing with Timeliness with a view to avoid complaints whilst improving client satisfaction:

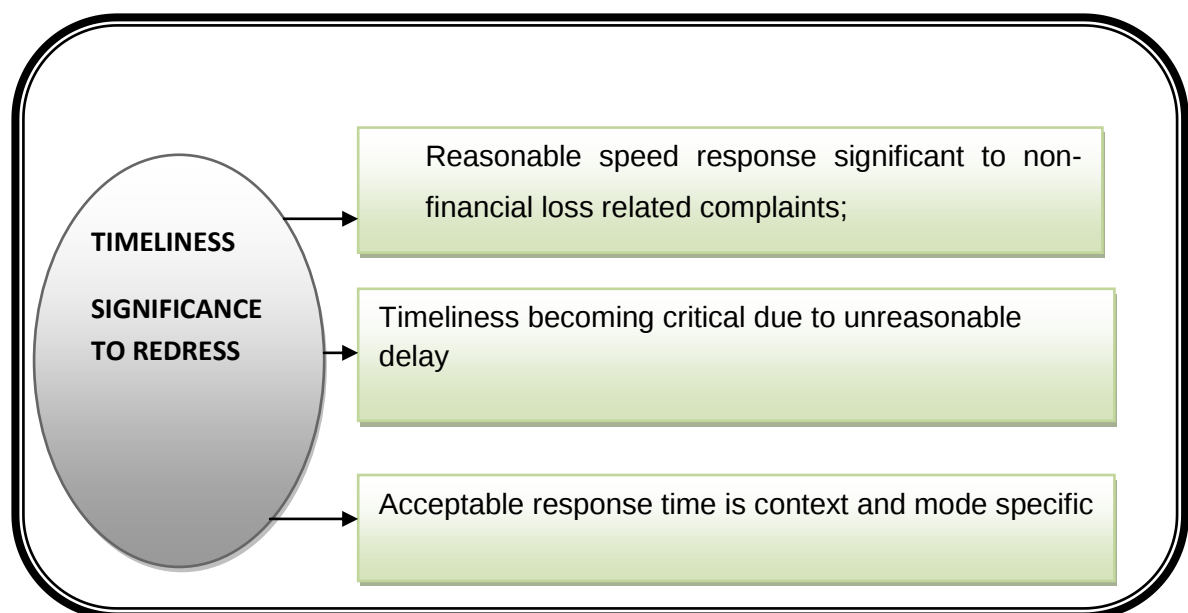


Figure 10 Davidow (2000): Timeliness proposition to redress

Redress requires acceptable response and reasonable speed and timeliness in complaints resolution to ensure beneficiary and citizen satisfaction.

b) Facilitation:

Batho Pele Handbook, (2004), *White Paper on Service Delivery*, (1997), Maxham and Netemeyer, (2002) and Davidow, (2000) all emphasise the importance of departments and organizations striving towards the placing of relevant and responsive policies and procedures using “facilitation” as one of the key dimensions of the redress mechanisms for internal and external responses in dealing with beneficiary complaints.

Citizens need to be informed about the redress processes, procedures and to whom they should direct their complaints in seeking redress when aggrieved, and so on. Senior managers, as one of the key stakeholders in the service delivery value chain, need to have an understanding about how “facilitation” as redress mechanism operates, including roles and responsibilities of all the role players in the process.

Furthermore, the facilitation dimension is viewed as critical as a means towards reducing the effect of word of mouth which may result in negative results. The facilitation dimension, if correctly implemented, may have a positive effect for future utilization of a service and/or product. Understanding the context, process and procedures of the department in how they deal with complaints and redress will go the extra mile in bringing the required satisfaction of the service provided (Maxham & Netemeyer, 2002).

c) Apology:

An apology is one of the strategic dimensions of the redress mechanisms likely to enhance the quality of service delivery to beneficiaries when dealing with complaints and service failure within the public service. An apology is viewed as one of the critical initial steps for acknowledging the complaint for non-delivery, or for not meeting the promised or expected service standards.

An apology as part of the redress and compliant handling is likely to enhance the quality of service delivery to beneficiaries, enhance staff morale and have a

positive effect on citizen satisfaction. The redress and complaints mechanisms put in place by Government departments and institutions should utilize apology among others, as part of the remedy and/or solution to the service failure.

d) Credibility:

In dealing with the redress and complaints issues across the public service, departments are expected to put in place mechanisms that seek to ensure that citizens and beneficiaries are provided with acceptable, reliable and accurate verifiable information. Citizens need information to gain a better understanding of what is going on inside government and participation to voice their opinion in this regard.

e) Attentiveness:

Attentiveness in Redress and complaints in the context of this study is viewed as one of the key mechanisms of interactions and communications that can enhance or distract complaints and/or redress satisfaction by public servants to service beneficiaries and/or citizens (Davidow, 2000). Citizens should be consistently treated with courtesy, politely and attentively when interacting with government.

f) Redress:

The implementation of the Redress dimension of organization requires adequate and appropriate resources and should be driven by the requisite skills for preventative measures and/or initiatives to deal with redress and complaints.

Redress principles and service delivery mechanisms put emphasis on competencies required and/or that should be in place to deal with complaints and redress within the department. These include the knowledge and skills to be demonstrated and portrayed by public servants and/or service providers in dealing with complaints and redress within the public service.

Appropriate resources, which include both the finance and human, are also critical to support implementation, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and feedback

to give citizens and/or beneficiaries the required voice and satisfaction in service delivery. The above suggests that redress is sought to strengthen the citizens' trust and their willingness to work and cooperate with government departments in the context of service delivery.

Service delivery improvement emphasises quality and time-bound delivery of services, transparency, accountability, timely redressing of grievances, consultation with citizens, value for money and importantly, enhancing citizens' satisfaction. Improvement in this regard is not about the size of each step critical within the value chain, but is instead the "likelihood that improvement will be ongoing".

Continuous improvement therefore implies an approach to improving performance, which assumes more and smaller incremental improvement steps to the services rendered to the citizens. The momentum of continuous service improvements and the improvement thereof is critical for service delivery implementation.

2.6 Key Instruments and Tools in Support of Redress Principle

The government has put in place the legislative framework in support of the complaints handling mechanisms. The Redress processes and procedures are embedded in the legislative framework of the South African Government with the following as the key examples among others:

The South African **Constitution** enshrines universal rights to basic service and requires that services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias. People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy-making. Importantly, Public Administration must be accountable; and transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information.

The **Promotion of Administrative Justice Act** upholds the citizen's rights to express dissatisfaction with public services provided. A mechanism for complaints is thus a critical element in the value chain of Redress. The Act

further sought to confirm the citizen's right to consultation and redress in the event where rights are adversely affected by an administrative action.

Promotion of Access to Information Act (Act 2 of 2000) challenges all Public Service institutions to develop through a consultative process, publish, implement and monitor their complaints management systems and procedures to ensure quality delivery to citizens to ensure citizen satisfaction.

Part III C of the **Public Service Regulation (PSR): 2001** requires the Executive authority to establish and sustain a Service Delivery Improvement Plan for his/her department that must ensure coverage of current and future complaints mechanisms to deal with complaints as part of redress.

Batho Pele Service Delivery White Paper: 1997 lays emphasis on the need to meet basic needs through improved service delivery, redressing past imbalances in the provision of public services, and government-community partnerships to ensure value for public money and quality of public service delivery.

The White Paper emphasises the need and importance to integrate effective and efficient complaints handling mechanisms which stress particular attitudes, acts and behaviours which may include courteous behaviour and attitudes at all time when rendering services to citizens, transparency and openness when providing such services. The redress process therefore places the focus and deals with the complaint and/or service not being provided according to the promised standard.

Service Delivery Improvement Plans: *Public Service Regulations: 2001* requires an executive authority to establish and sustain service delivery improvement programmes (SDIPs) for his or her department which should include a complaints/compliments management system.

The Regulations are explicit in providing a clear standard framework on how the service delivery improvement mechanism which integrates a complaints measure should be developed towards improving the delivery of services within the public service.

The SDIP should clearly specify its main services that are provided to the targeted service recipients. It should further specify how the consultation

process with citizens will take place; what are the implementation gaps and challenges that require improvement based on the promised and/or expected standard.

Furthermore, the Plan should stipulate and put in place measures for handling complaints or compliments in the event of dissatisfaction with service delivered. Based on the above argument, the SDIP of a department, which is mandatory, should be inclusive of complaints handling management systems and processes as cited by the principle of Redress.

2.7 Redress value chain to enhance service delivery

The literature reviewed on redress and complaints handling undertaken in this study suggests the importance of a logical flow and systematic citizens complaints handling mechanisms to identify failures and dissatisfaction in service delivery.

The redress and complaint process adapted from Ridge & Bell, (1992: 61) White Paper on Transformation of the Public Service, (1997) and Batho *Pele* Hand Book: (2004) is depicted as follows by figure 11:

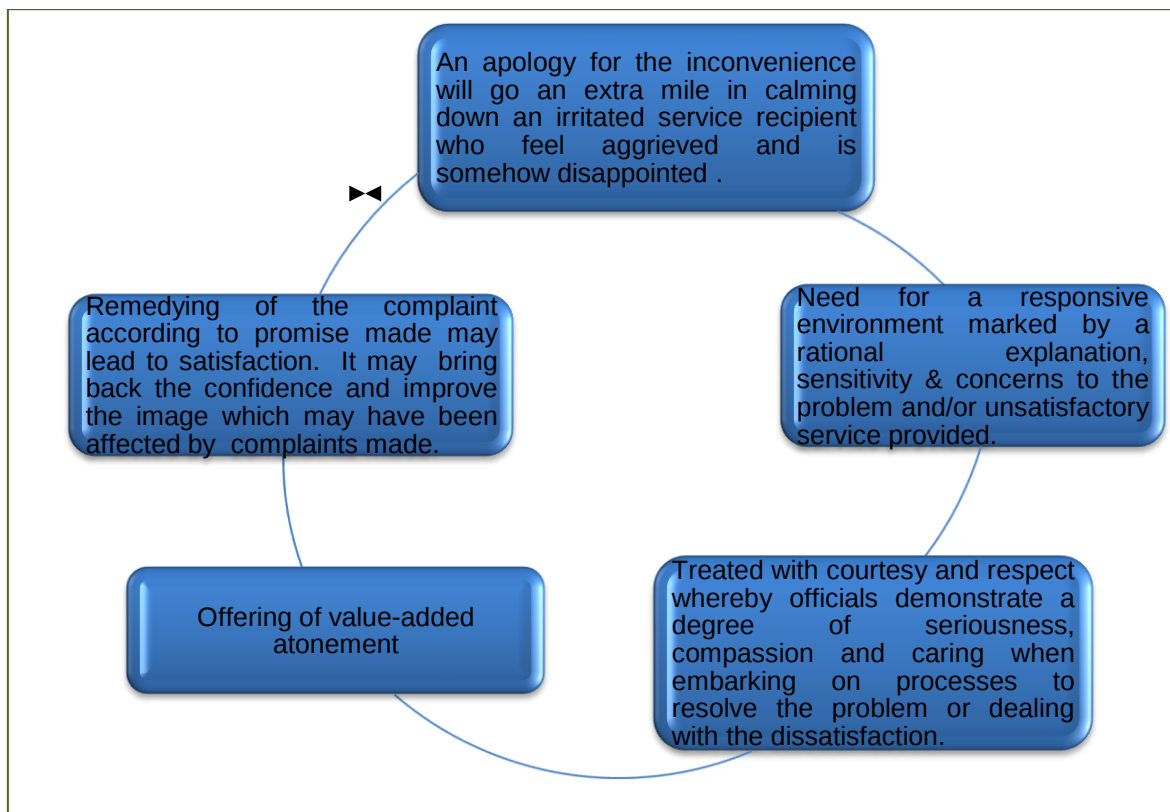


Figure 11: Adapted complaints handling process

Scholars and studies in this regard argue that Redress requires simplified systems and procedures in place for citizens to share their complaints aiming at soliciting a solution to identified service delivery challenges.

The logic depicted in Figure 11 requires among others, senior managers' ability to strive towards getting answers to the following key questions to deal with redress and complaints matters:

How does the department utilize **apology** as one of the initial responsive step as redress measure towards resolving a complaint as a result of service delivery failure and/or promised/expected standard not met?

What measures have you put in place to ensure a conducive environment to enable public servants, especially frontline officials, to explain with empathy, courtesy and attentively to beneficiaries in the event of unsatisfactory service delivered?

What remedial measures have been put in place for redress and complaints handling, and will those measures be able to bring back the image and professionalism of both the department and the public service in general?

An apology is viewed as one of the initial critical steps towards redressing the imbalances that may have led to citizen dissatisfaction and complaints as a result of service failure. Apology becomes even more meaningful when done in a sensitive and courteous manner.

Thus far, only a few departments in the public service have put in place documented processes to deal with redress and complaints handling whilst most are still struggling to put in place mechanisms that will enable systematic compliance with the Redress principle.

The value-chain and effective operations by senior managers within the public service are expected to gain strength by utilizing the supporting legislative framework, policies, tools, mechanisms and structures which incorporate and integrate redress and complaints mechanisms in the delivery of effective and efficient public services.

2.8 Critical Elements of Redress mechanisms in the Public Sector

Departments, through senior managers, are part of the key stakeholders in the delivery chain expected to put in place operations that will instil the Redress mechanisms to deal with complaints and/or service failure. These may, among others, ensure citizen satisfaction; improve the image, professionalism of the department as well as the morale of the public servants when doing their work.

Some critical elements aimed at assisting and supporting senior managers to ensure systematic processes for dealing with **redress** include:

2.8.1 Need for Proactive measures with redress measures

Organisations and departments are expected to put in place measures to detect and address service delivery complaints and redress within the public service. As such, senior managers should be proactive by putting in place measures to detect and deal with the redress and complaints to ensure citizen satisfaction.

Pycraft, Singh, Pihlela, Slack, Chambers and Johnston (2007:585) propose the following mechanisms to enable the departments, through its senior managers to proactively detect service delivery failure which may lead to complaints and the need for redress:

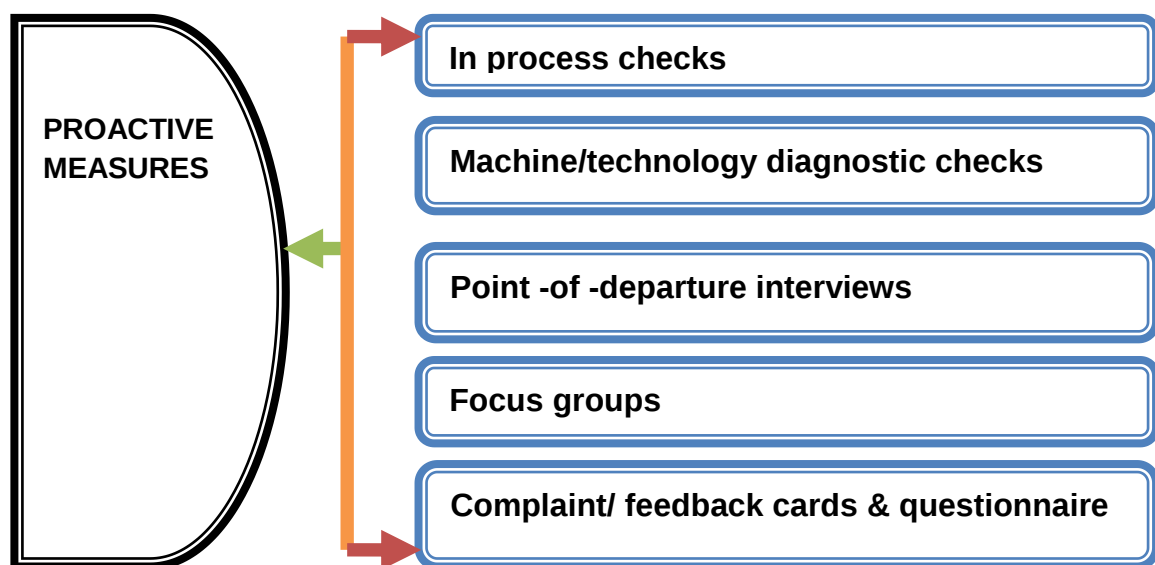


Figure 12- adapted proactive measures to inform redress in the event of service failure

In process checks proactively seek to afford the beneficiary and public servants as service providers the opportunity to check the acceptability of the service according to the expected standard during the process of provision and/or interface with the public service..

Machine/technology diagnostic checks call for the continuous testing and re-testing of the technology and/or machines utilized for service delivery to proactively detect any possible failure in this regard which may lead to dissatisfaction and complaints.

Point-of-departure interviews is a mechanism to check and determine the satisfaction level of beneficiaries at the end of service provided to determine any possible dissatisfaction and/or complaints from service failure which may require redress.

Focus groups: this is a mechanism that can be proactively established, comprising the service beneficiaries to determine their satisfaction level. This platform can provide prior intelligence regarding the possible failure of service delivery and the possible dissatisfaction to enable senior managers to put in place correct and responsive redress measures.

Complaint or feedback cards and questionnaire mechanisms used to solicit and determine the satisfaction level of the service beneficiaries about a particular service and/or product.

2.8.2 Redress platforms and mechanisms

Senior managers have the responsibility of ensuring effective and efficient delivery of service to all through, among others, ensuring of the transparent and simplified implementation processes, coordinating committees, structures, or forums in their respective departments.

The identified processes and coordinating structures should integrate the redress and complaints handling to deal with citizen dissatisfaction in the event of a service failure and/or not provided according to the expected or promised standard.

The literature review undertaken in this study suggested various mechanisms utilized by senior managers in the public service to put into operations the principle of redress.

The following as depicted in figure 13 were cited as popular forms of redress and complaints handling mechanisms used mostly to discuss and engage possible citizen/beneficiary dissatisfaction in service delivery:

- ✓ Workshops.
- ✓ Meetings.
- ✓ BP Coordinators' Forum.
- ✓ Unannounced site visits.
- ✓ Izimbizos; and
- ✓ Complaints/compliments boxes

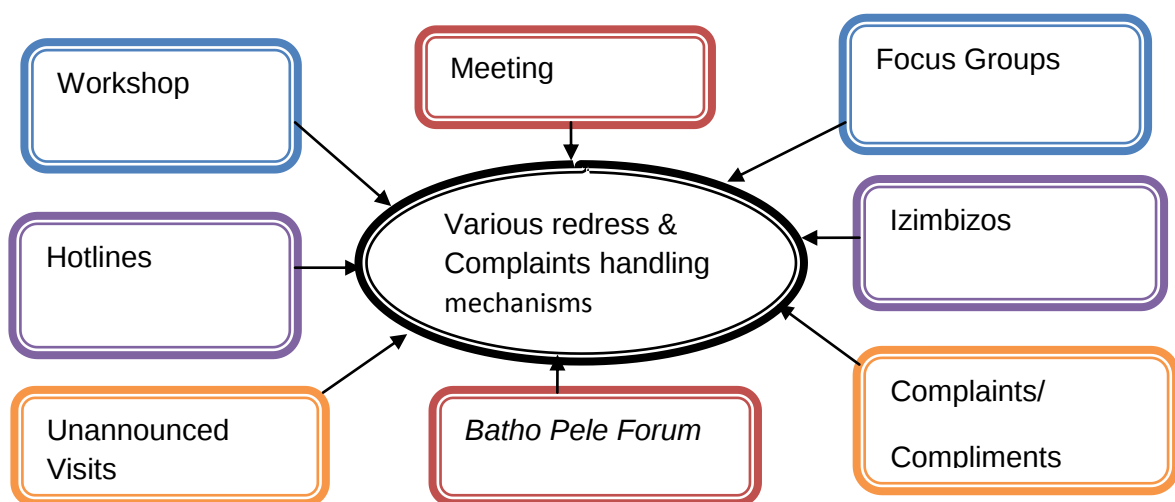


Figure 13: Examples of complaints handling platforms towards redress in Public Service

a) Batho Pele Forum

Batho Pele Forums across the public service were established as a vehicle to coordinate the implementation and monitoring of the *Batho Pele* revitalisation programme launched in 2004. In support of implementation, the departments are expected to nominate and/or employ *Batho Pele* Coordinators to drive the implementation of the *Batho Pele* principles which include Redress.

Moynihan (2008:33) argues that learning forums are critical to provide platforms for the routine discussions and dialogue about the data and information collected around service delivery. Forums therefore, are one of strategic mechanisms towards the completion of a structural approach to learning.

The platform should afford members with the opportunity to reflect and examine their implementation challenges and possible solutions based on lessons learnt and best practices.

Literature review and the research highlighted the challenges experienced by managers in establishing, implementing and sustaining the *Batho Pele* Forum. The following are proposed as key sustainability elements for *Batho Pele* Forums in advancing the Batho Pele initiative, integrating redress principles across the public service (Moyonihan,2008):

Batho Pele Forums. It should be a routine event with clear facilitation and coordination rules to ground the debates and conversations and be collegial.

Provide opportunity for diverse discussions, lessons and best practices based on the Batho Pele initiatives and, in particular, Redress as a focus of this study.

Usage of qualitative knowledge identifying failure, successes and possible solutions.

Taking advantage of experiential knowledge and skills on processes and systems which explain success, failure and possible innovation

FIGURE 18: Adapted Sustainability Elements for *Batho Pele* Forums

Senior managers within the *DPSA* should take the opportunity of positioning the *Batho Pele* Forum as one of the key platforms to institutionalise the lessons emerging from the implementation and monitoring of the Redress Principle to ensure continuous improvement.

b) Unannounced visits

The unannounced visit is one of the key mechanism of *Batho Pele* which seeks to provide a platform for the Executive Authorities and senior managers across the public service with an opportunity for first-hand experience and observation on the level and quality of service delivery delivered to beneficiaries and/or citizens, service delivery challenges, especially, facing frontline officials as well as the redress measures, implementation and feedback.

It seeks to engender a sense of urgency, professionalism, courtesy and seriousness among officials regarding service delivery by putting People First. Unannounced visits also seek to inspire and motivate public servants to do more and go an extra mile in providing services to all, whilst service as a tool engages with service beneficiaries, their challenges and proposed solutions to redress in line with *Batho Pele*.

c) Izimbizos

The South African Government introduced Izimbizos to improve access, ensure consultation and also to deal with the redress principle through systematic and clear processes. The Izimbizo sessions are engagement and interaction sessions with various stakeholders, including communities, to determine the service delivery challenges and/or failures among others, in order to determine and institute relevant interventions and redress measures.

Participation at Izimbizo sessions includes, among others, engagements and meetings with the community around service delivery issues by Executive Authorities across the three spheres, public servants, Metro/District/Municipality, Business, labour, NGOs, CBOs, and so on.

The above is also carried out through walk-about or project visit/s to verify the work done as well as to get feedback and/or inputs from stakeholders, especially

communities. Technology could also be used to advance the intent of the imbizos, for example, an Imbizo-on-radio phone-in programme.

d) Workshop

Workshop mechanism is also identified as a crucial platform used to redress and address complaints and/or service delivery failure in line with *Batho Pele*. Senior managers within the public service convene workshops based on an “Issue Specific” service delivery challenge which may be emanating from Izimbizos, senior management deployment, outreach, and unannounced visits reports.

Among other things, these workshops are supposed to discuss policy issues, service delivery complaints and challenges raised, develop responsive solutions and work plans in support of implementation, monitoring and continuous update and feedback to the beneficiaries and/or citizens.

e) Meeting

Meeting mechanism remain one of the key vehicles senior managers utilise as one of the platforms of redress and complaints handling especially between department officials and other stakeholders like business, labour, NGOs and so on, to discuss and share complaints and issues around citizens dissatisfaction with the service delivered. Meeting platform is also used to share lessons learnt and best practices on responsive redress to address the complaints and service failure to ensure citizen satisfaction.

f) Focus Groups

Senior Managers in some of the government departments do utilize the focus group platform as an opportunity to engage and discuss a particular service delivery policy issue, the implementation challenges thereof and possible solutions to ensure continuous improvement.

The debates and conversations in these kinds of groups afford senior managers opportunities to share and learn about the lessons learnt to ensure responsive measures in dealing with the service delivery issues which may be causing dissatisfaction to the beneficiaries as a result of delivery below the expected standard and/or service failure.

g) Hotlines

Hotlines are viewed as a tool for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the service delivery policies and framework by the public service. In the South African context among others, it acts as a tool to support the Chapter 9 institutions, charged with the oversight responsibility on service delivery, for example, Public Protector, the Public Service Commission in the resolution of the complaints reported through their institutions.

The South African Presidential Hotline in the Office of the President was set up in September 2009 with the main objective being to respond to the public concerns at the pace at which the government responds to complaints of citizens. The hotline serves as a tool and capacity to ensure proactive intervention by the relevant departments to deal with citizen dissatisfaction and redress including providing feedback and reporting to the Presidency on the state of the complaints management in the Public Service.

The focus of the Presidential Hotline thus far include information gathering to ensure that departments integrate and set up complaints management systems and mechanisms in their delivery of services to the citizens in line with the legislative framework across the three spheres.

h) Complaints/compliments boxes

The White Paper on Service Delivery (*Batho Pele*: 1997) requires government departments across the public service to establish a citizen complaints management capacity with clear procedures, officially published to enable citizens the knowledge and understanding of the process to follow to ensure redress when aggrieved with the service provided.

Although most departments are using the complaints/compliments boxes, the need to put in place a systematic process and mechanisms to handle and provide feedback remains a challenge and requires continuous improvements including the use of technology.

2.9 Success factors underpinning redress and complaints handling:

The Batho Pele Handbook: 2004 highlighted the following key success factors underpinning the redress and complaints mechanisms that senior managers should be aware of in the delivery of services:

The need to ensure targeted **Accessibility** of complaints and redress measures through broader publicity to the actual and potential beneficiaries. As a result, the Complaints and redress management process and systems should be well publicised, easy to use and within reach. Among other things, the process and system should avoid excessive formalities and encourage face to face communication.

Citizens and/or beneficiaries require **Speedy** response to redress. Citizens usually become more dissatisfied when a response to a complaint takes a long time to be resolved without any feedback. A complaints and redress management process and system should provide opportunities for a quick response and feedback. In the event where a response cannot be given within the expected timeframe and/or standard, the complainant should be kept informed of the progress and told when an outcome can be expected.

Fairness is also viewed as one of the crucial success factors of redress. The complaints and redress processes and systems should demonstrate elements of fairness and impartiality to inspire confidence and credibility. A fair process and system should provide and allow for an independent avenue in the event where the citizen and/or beneficiary are still dissatisfied with the response and/or solution provided.

An environment that ensures and integrate **confidentiality** in their service delivery may go an extra mile towards encouraging citizens and/or service recipients to complaints and/or compliments. Their confidentiality in this regard will make them feel that they will be protected to even lodge future complaints and redress issues.

Responsiveness is also crucial towards redress and citizen satisfaction. The response to a complaint should be dealt with courteously and with great empathy taking into consideration the service recipient's concerns and feelings in line with

Batho Pele. Where a mistake has been made regarding the provision of a service, an apology with the full explanation and assurance that occurrence will not be repeated, should be given to a complainant.

Continuous **Review** and reflection is critical to assess improvement and lack thereof in dealing with redress and complaints. A redress and complaints management process and procedure among others, should incorporate a mechanism for review of complaints, feedback suggestions for corrective change to departments with a view to avoid similar mistakes and failures in future.

Public servants and or users of the redress and complaints management mechanism requires ongoing **Training** to ensure correct and effective usage thereof. As a result, the available redress and complaints management procedures and standards should be publicized throughout the departments, and officials should be trained so that they know what action to take in this regard.

In support of the above argument of ensuring effective and efficient redress, Pycraft, *et al*, (2010) highlight the following generic performance objectives as central towards citizen satisfaction in service delivery, critical for senior managers in the public service:

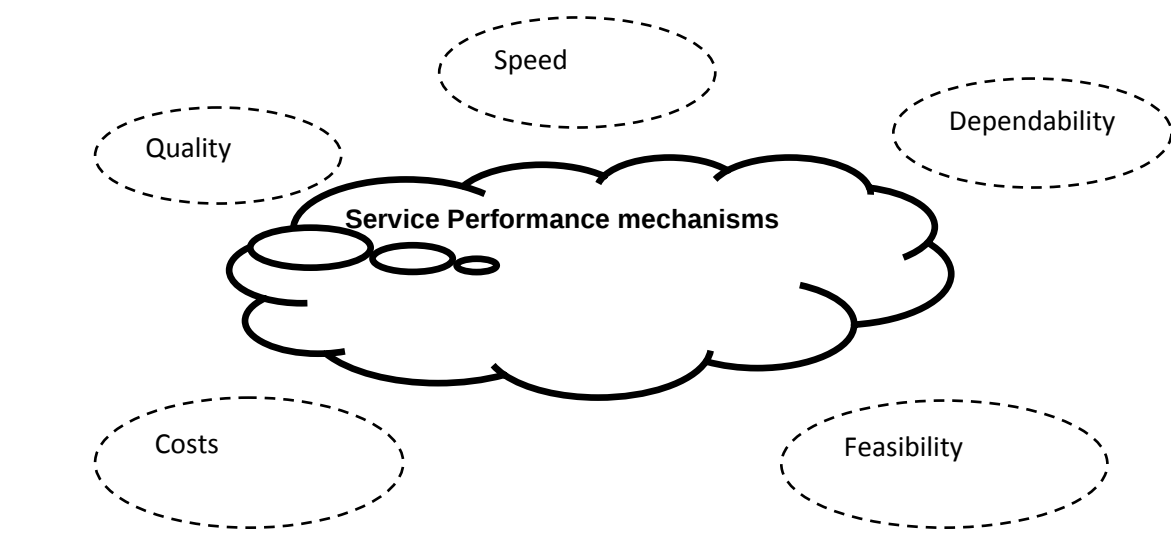


Figure 14: Adapted Service Performance Mechanisms critical for redress: Pycraft, *et al*, (2010)

Based on the above, the redress mechanisms developed, implemented and monitored by senior managers should integrate service performance objectives critical for the success of operations management to ensure citizen satisfaction which include:

Quality:

Citizens expect services to be provided correctly the first time as this could be a major influence on citizen's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Quality in service delivery has both the external and internal impact. Externally, quality as promised/expected is likely to increase customer satisfaction whilst internally it is likely to stabilize and improve the efficiency of processes, cost reduction and speed.

Speed:

Speed is also considered as key to the performance operations. The speed at which the service is provided as expected, reduces risks and the likelihood of complaints and implications which may lead to further complaints and dissatisfaction.

Dependability:

Clear understanding of the logical flow, value-chain and dependability in operations will go an extra mile in saving time and money whilst increasing satisfaction in that measures will be in place to ensure that citizens are provided with the service (s) according to the expected and/or promised standard.

Flexibility:

Flexibility mechanisms should integrate and be built in to service delivery in response to the possible changing environment and/or situation to ensure citizen satisfaction. Flexibility in processes, systems, time and people in the delivery of service, could, among others, speed up the responses, save time, review and/or strengthening of the processes and system, competencies and knowledge towards redress which may improve citizen satisfaction among others.

Costs:

One of the critical performance objectives is the ability to put in measures to keep the **costs** of the operations down and ensure value for money without lowering productivity and the expected/promised service standard. Some of the lessons are that performance objectives, as articulated above, are critical in service delivery.

Redress mechanisms and complaints handling measures should be informed by, among others, the extent to which senior managers are knowledgeable and competent to take into account the significance of quality, speed, flexibility, dependability and keeping costs as low as possible when dealing with redress within the public service. (Pycraft, *et al*, (2010).

2.10 Lessons learnt towards redress in the Public Service

Senior managers are expected to take advantage and recognition of the lessons learnt and emerging from how implementation, monitoring and reporting on redress mechanisms within the public service seek to advance the intent of service delivery improvement by Putting People First. As a result, redress and complaints mechanisms should be integral part of service delivery within the departments.

Service beneficiaries and/or citizens require access to an effective, well consulted, publicized redress and complaint procedures to deal with grievances in the event services provided do not meet the expected and/or promised standard.

The implementation of the Redress principle in the context of *Batho Pele* should draw lessons from the literature available, based on the studies and reports from various interest groups, for example, Chapter 9 Institutions, various platforms and mechanisms utilised to advance interactive dialogue and conversations in this regard.

Ongoing documenting, sharing and where applicable, replicating of the lessons learnt of redress and complaints through defined platforms to ensure continuous service delivery improvement is critical. Moynihan (2008:25) argues that interactive dialogue towards learning and lessons learnt should be informed

among others by the identification of the type of learning in which departments and/or institutions can engage.

The complaints and redress mechanisms have the potential to be a source of learning especially for senior managers, which can be used to promote the higher standard whilst providing managers with valuable opportunity to learn from the citizens' dissatisfactions and/or perceptions of events.

There is a need to identify and articulate the direction and path to inform the envisaged learning, including the form and characteristics of the kind of platform and mechanisms to foster such learning of redress and complaints mechanisms, to ensure responsiveness and productivity in service delivery.

2.11 Conclusion

The redress principle aims at improving service delivery within the public service, build confidence and the image of the public service by giving citizens a voice through a structured and systematically designed process.

The availability of the complaints and redress systems within the public service seek to strengthen trust with the citizens. Literature review supports and suggests the gaps around the complaints handling support within the public service.

Different scholars based on the reports, studies, reviews and journals utilised for this study confirm that the public service departments should establish and implement complaints handling systems which are driven by the elements of accessibility, fairness, responsiveness and confidentiality

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. INTRODUCTION

Following the Literature Review in Chapter 2 of this study, Chapter 3 provides the research methodology utilised in responding to the problem statement and purpose of this research which seeks to **explore** the primary research question which is to ascertain:

“The extent the redress principle of Batho Pele through complaints handling mechanisms has been implemented in the DPSA”.

This Chapter outlines the research and sampling methods used in responding to the primary questions; the data collection techniques and procedures were carefully considered given the sample size of 8 senior managers and scope to ensure the validity and reliability and the concluding remarks.

Qualitative and quantitative data was sought from a purposive sample made up of **eight** senior managers selected from the five Branches of the *DPSA*. Given the nature of the study as informed by the purpose, the problem statement and the research questions, the Qualitative and Quantitative methods and the relevance thereof, provided the researcher with the opportunity to discover possible answers to questions posed through the application of scientific procedures as well as interviews and observations during this study.

The *DPSA* as one of the center departments is mandated to co-ordinate and facilitate the implementation of service delivery improvement programmes which include the *Batho Pele* Policy within the Public Service. The department is perceived as the custodian and key driver of *Batho Pele*. Its mandate includes, among other, the provision of frameworks and guidelines to national and provincial administrations to support policy implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback in this regard.

The *Batho Pele* Principle of “Redress” as one of the eight principles emphasises the need for service delivery initiatives, frameworks, programmes, and so on, to integrate redress and complaints support to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

Through redress, the departments put in place mechanisms that will take into cognizance the satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction of the beneficiaries with the services provided.

The public service departments are expected in terms of the Public Service Act: (1994) and *Batho Pele* White Paper (1997) to implement and put in place mechanisms and systems for Redress Principle to deal with complaints of the citizens in the event that service delivered is not according to the agreed upon standard. Among other things, citizens should be afforded a sympathetic, positive response during redress and complaints handling.

3.1 Research Design

Given the broader interest and the need to understand the continued challenges with the implementation of the Redress Principle and the *DPSA* support in this regard; sample size and the expected time for the study; the instruments supporting a two-phase data collection based on the quantitative and qualitative methods was deemed appropriate and were therefore developed for the study.

The relevance and interest utilising these two methods, although different but complimentary, was informed by the significance of this research, which aims at providing a logical interpretation of the challenges around implementation, whilst balancing that with a linear research path, testing certain assumptions in this study (Neuman, 2011; Davies, 2007).

Based on the implementation challenges of the redress mechanisms, procedures and systems across the public service and in the *DPSA* as a focus department, the design of applying both the qualitative and quantitative approaches was considered appropriate and relevant.

Through the methodology utilised, the researcher intends taking the research beyond providing answers whilst avoiding emphasis only on “numbers versus no numbers” as cautioned by Lee (1999) and Creswell (1994) respectively.

The two approaches mentioned above assisted with the design of the research instruments as it made provisions for the usage of numbers to highlight the progress made with the implementation, the challenges encountered whilst at the same time providing the analysis and interpretation of the storyline emanating from this research and thus giving meaning to the numbers and beyond on the *Batho Pele* redress principle.

3.2. Sampling

The research sample of this study was informed by the fact that the public service departments across the three spheres of government are expected to develop redress and complaints handling mechanisms. The redress mechanisms should aim at providing the citizens with a systematic process and/or platform to deal with their situation in the event where a service or services are not provided as promised and/or expected in line with *Batho Pele*.

The *DPSA* as focus department is mandated to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the *Batho Pele* principle as one of the service delivery transformation policies.

Literature reviewed and some of the government reports utilised for the purposes of this study highlighted that, since the inception of *Batho Pele* Policy in 1997, only few departments and managers integrate citizens' complaints and redress mechanisms as part of continuous service delivery improvement within their area of work.

Redress principle is not integrated in the performance operations of the department to ensure systematic process and approach to citizen dissatisfaction in the event where service expectations are not met. The sampling process took into account the scope, the purpose and research questions to be answered by the study in relation to the Redress principle.

3.3 Purposeful Sampling Method

Purposive sampling refers to “a non-random samples in which researcher uses a wide range of methods to locate all possible cases of a highly specific and difficult-to-reach population” (Neuman, 2011: 222). The purposive sampling method was deemed suitable for this study given the sample size.

The sampling method also takes into account that the research is undertaken for a specific purpose of exploring the reasons why senior managers are unable to implement the redress principle in contravention of the *Batho Pele* policy. The relevance and appropriateness of the sampling method provided the researcher with enough scope to carefully select respondents in support of the purpose of this study.

The above includes the selected senior managers in the different branches of the *DP*SA as a center department charged with the responsibility of putting in measures for dealing with grievances and complaints for redress within the public service. To this end, Neuman (2011) argues that Purposive Sampling in the main, supports the selection of unique cases that are specifically informative and that of members of a difficult-to-reach, specialized population.

Despite its advantages and relevance for this study, purposive sampling does have limitations in that at times it could be difficult to generalize the findings. Based on the sample size, the mandate, roles and responsibility of the department, the researcher may not be able to make a conclusive generalisation and determination about the challenges of the implementation of the *Batho Pele* Redress principle across the public service as the selected sample may not represent the population based on the gathered information available.

The knowledge gathered in this study is still critical and will assist in making meaningful assumptions to inform work around future implementation and research studies of redress principles within the public service.

3.4 Purposive Sampling from the *DPSA* as a focus area

The researcher identified and purposefully selected a total number of eight (8) senior managers from the four different *DPSA* Branches for inclusion in the study. The selection of senior managers was driven by the expectation they are supposed to drive the service delivery improvement programmes which should integrate the complaints handling mechanism for redress in the context of *Batho Pele* during the provision of services.

The senior managers' relevance for this study is significant as they are one of the key stakeholders expected to integrate complaints handling and redress processes and mechanisms in service delivery to deal with citizen dissatisfaction in the event where the promise and/or expected service is not met.

Senior managers are further responsible for the development, implementation, monitoring and feedback on service delivery policies, frameworks and programmes which should integrate redress and complaints mechanisms where standards are not met when interfacing with the citizens and/or service beneficiaries.

In order to put context to the methodology and sample of this study, sharing of the overall configuration of the *DPSA* is critical and it is as follows:

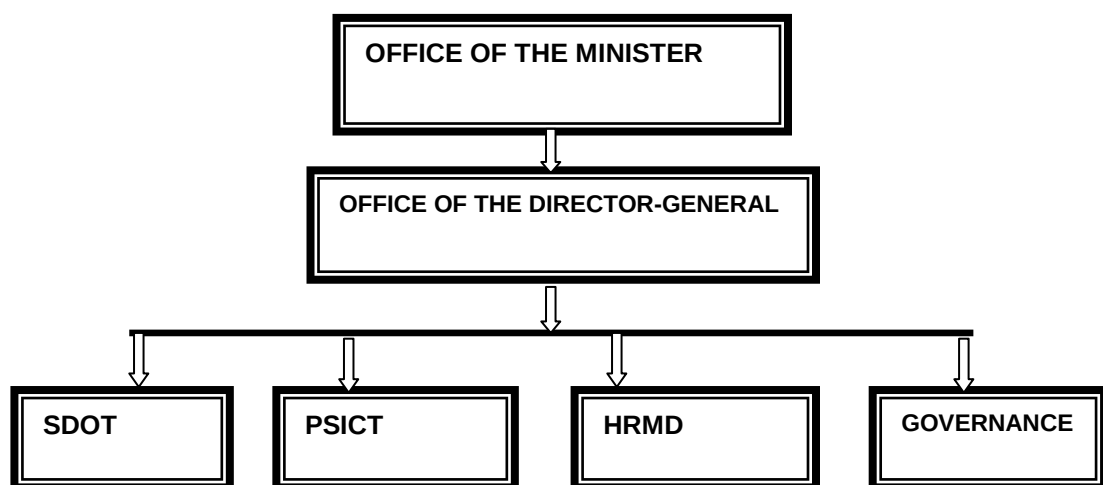


Figure 15: Different Branches of the Department of Public Service & Administration

In facilitating the process, all the questionnaires e-mailed and/or hand delivered to the respondents had a covering letter, indicating that permission to undertake the study was granted by the Authorities within the *DPSA* as a focus department.

Senior managers were cordially informed about the purpose of the study, the benefits thereof to them, the department and the public service at large, as well as their expected role.

This covering letter further explained the purpose of the study, the anticipated time to be spent in completing the questionnaire, followed by the follow-up interview; the contact details of the researcher was also provided for questions and/or clarity, as well as thanking them in advance for their cooperation and support.

Furthermore, the respondents' anonymity was assured to ensure their openness and transparency in responding to the research questions. Assurance was given to them that the information gathered shall only be utilized for the purpose of the researcher meeting the partial requirements of the Master in Public Administration offered by Wits University.

3.5 Data Collection Tools.

Given the sample size for the study and efforts to ensure common understanding of what is expected of the key respondents; a one day meeting was conducted with a purpose of taking them through the methodology and the data collecting tools to be used in the study which include the following:

Structured questionnaires;
In-depth follow-up interviews and/or telephone with the respondents using guiding interview questions to ensure consistency and reliability.
Using preparatory meetings to further explain to the respondents the context and purpose of the study and the possible value-add to their area of work.

3.6 Validity and Reliability & response rate

Reliability and validity are critical in matters of measurements. As a result, careful considerations were made in the selection and development of appropriate tools to ensure relevance of the purpose, the primary questions to be responded to and the sample size of the study. Neuman (2011) argues that reliability is more concerned with dependability or consistency and this should be demonstrated by obtaining the same results in measuring the same thing whilst validity place emphasis on truthfulness.

The data collecting instruments, follow-up interviews and themes were standardized in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the study. The standardisation was guided by the literature review and some reports from the *DPSA OPSC* around the *Batho Pele* Redress Principle and Complaints handling mechanisms covering the following:

Towards and effective and efficient Redress Mechanisms.
Dimensions of Redress and Complaints handling mechanisms.
Processes of Complaints Handling to facilitate Redress.
Tools, Techniques, training & orientation towards a systematic and procedural redress and complaints handling;
Dealing with Complaints to ensure effective and efficient Redress for unmet promised/expected standards

Figure: 14: Emerging Redress Themes in this study

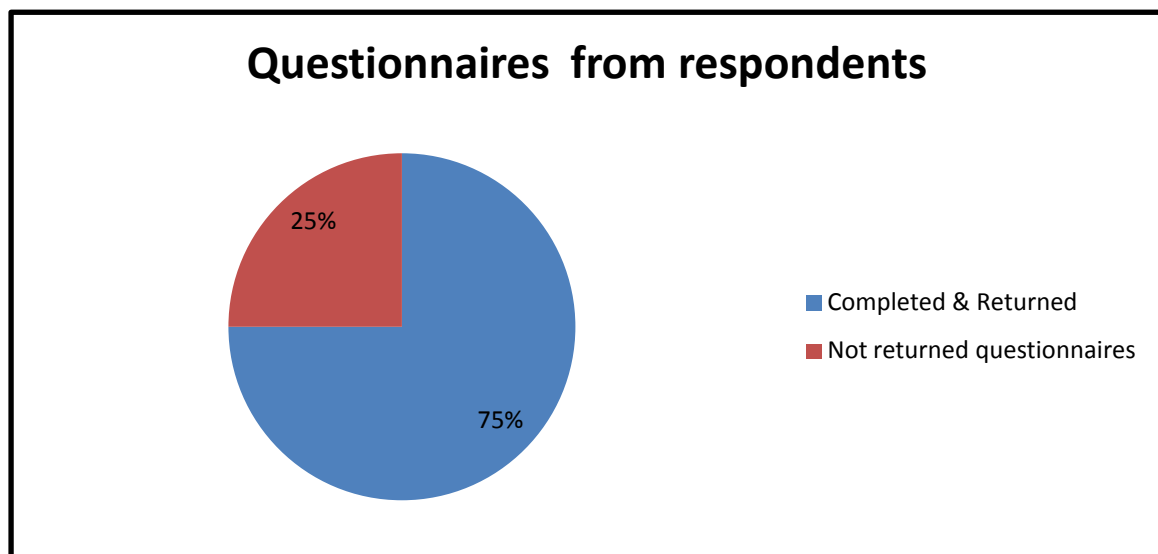
Among other things, standardisation also saved time, costs and had a positive effect on the value of the study as senior managers as respondents understood their expected role and the possible value-add of the results to their area of work.

The reliability and validity was further tested by piloting the data collecting instruments within the *DPSA* using senior managers other than the 8 who participated in the study. The pilot results did not suggest any improvements on the data collecting instruments.

A total number of eight (8) structured questionnaires were sent out to the four (4) Branches of the *DPSA* to participate in the study.

Of the questionnaires sent out, 6 out of 8 (seventy five percent) were completed and returned. Two (2) out of eight (8) that is, 25% questionnaires were not returned and the assumption made is that they were never completed.

Pie Chart 1 depicts senior managers' participation and response to the study:



(Pie Chart 1: Senior managers' responses)

3.7 Conclusions

The sampling of the senior managers as some of the implementers of the Redress principle will enrich inputs to recommendations aimed at supporting implementation beyond the studies to ensure citizen satisfaction.

Purposeful sampling of senior managers as respondents for the study is significant as they are expected to implement, monitor, and report on redress as part of *Batho Pele* to ensure citizen satisfaction when interfacing with government departments.

The research methodology and the instruments and tools for data collection were carefully developed, standardised and piloted to ensure validity and reliability of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4. INTRODUCTION

Having gone through the research methodology in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 intends providing the reader with the findings and analyses of the research study in response to the following:

The extent that the selected senior managers implement the redress principle in the DPSA, in compliance with Batho Pele Policy.

What are the available redress mechanisms to deal with complaints if service standards are not met as promised and/or expected within the public service?

The recommendations to deal with the challenges to improve implementation, monitoring and reporting and provides proposal for future work to ensure continuous improvement with the implementation of the redress principle.

The data analysed and findings sought to provide a picture of the extent to which the senior managers within the DPSA understand redress and complaints in line with *Batho Pele Policy: 1997*, the implementation thereof through various mechanisms and recommendations of complaints handling procedures towards effective and efficient service delivery across the public service.

The research instruments utilised were based on focused preparatory meetings to ensure consistency and understanding of expectations by respondents; structured questionnaires and follow-up telephonic and/or in person interviews were guided by the following key issues:

Understanding the Redress Principle.

Dimensions of Redress and Complaints handling mechanisms.

Processes of Complaints Handling to facilitate Redress.

Platforms, Tools, Training & Orientation towards Redress mechanisms;

Lessons learnt & best practices to effective Redress & citizen satisfaction.

Figure 15 Themes to drive the redress principle in this study

In order to ensure validity and reliability of the methodology and instruments used in the research; the respondents were taken through the following process:

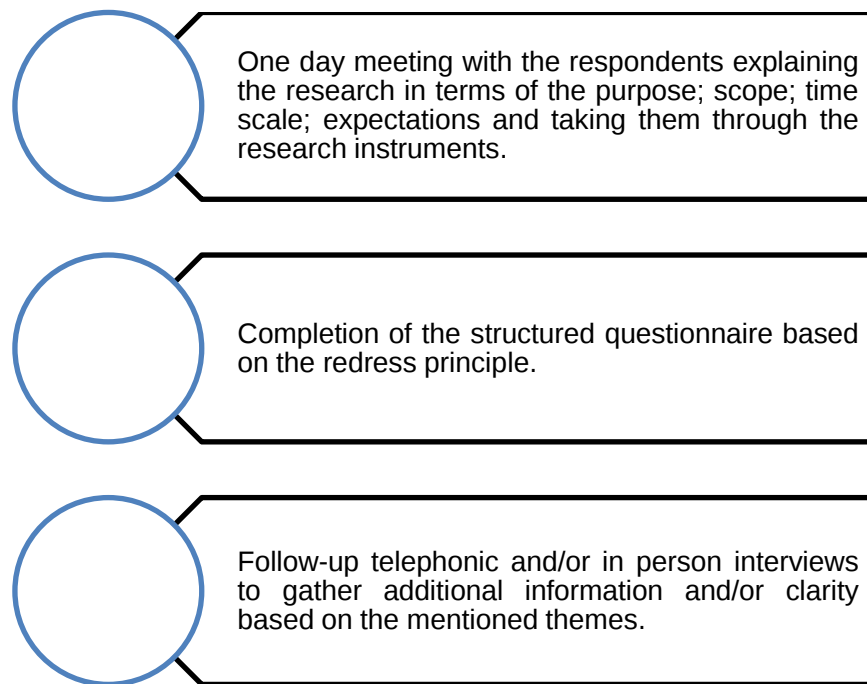
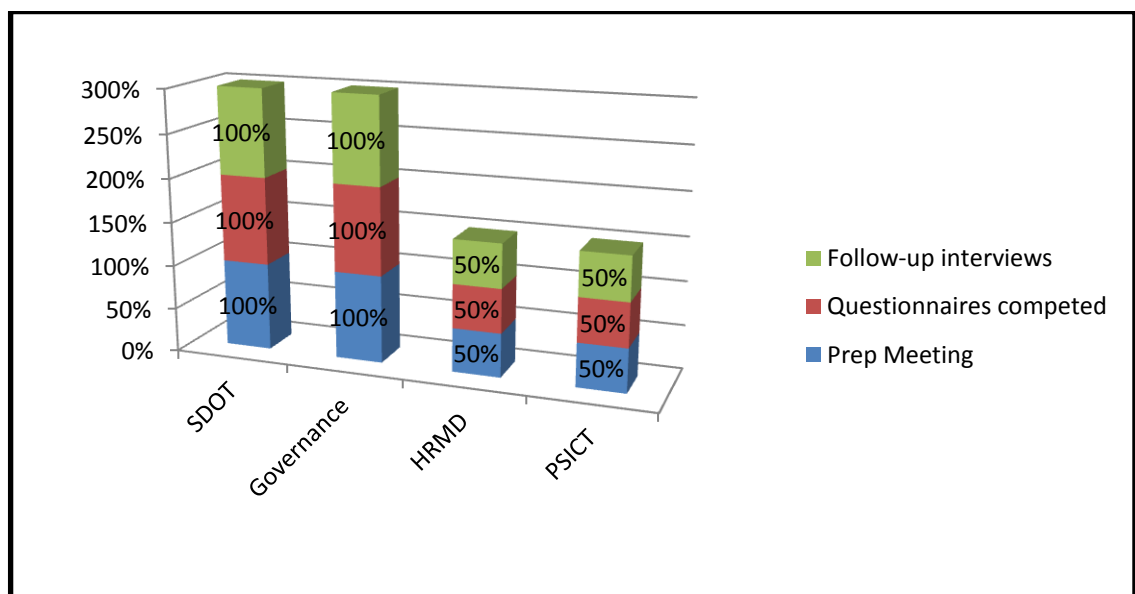


Figure 16: Process to improve reliability and validity of the study

The senior managers who completed and returned the questionnaires also participated in the preparatory meetings, and follow-up interviews. The breakdown of the respondents, who participated in the preparatory meetings, completed a structured questionnaire and follow-up interview is as follows:



Graph 2: Different instruments and senior managers' participation and responses

4.1 Context

The findings are based on the data from the four **(4)** Branches of the *DPSA* mentioned above comprising of the six **(6)** out of eight **(8)** senior managers who responded and participated in the study.

The number of questionnaires completed and received from the participants is depicted below as follows:

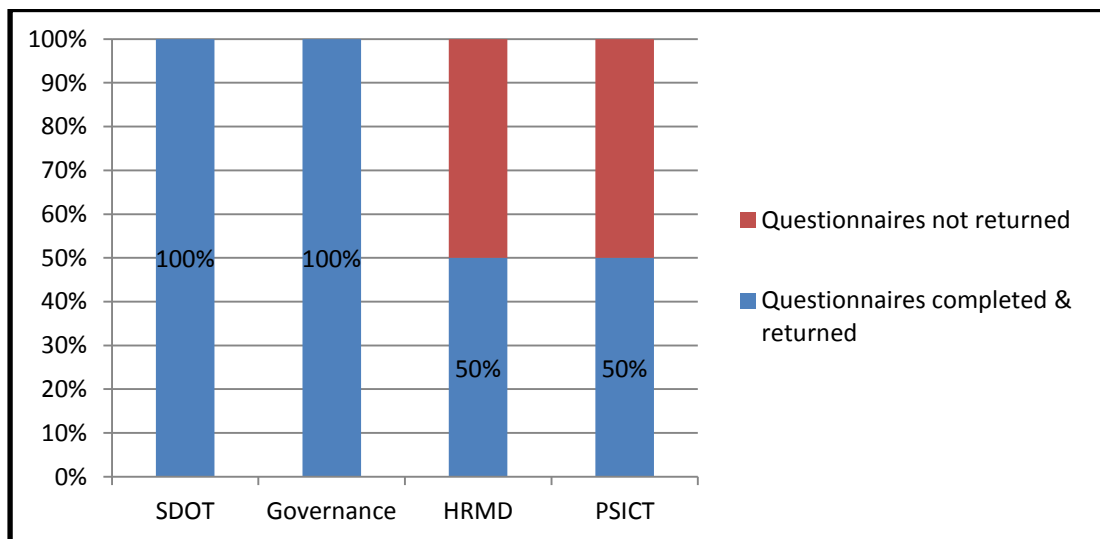
SDOT	: Both questionnaires received were completed and received back.
Governance	: Both questionnaires received were completed and received back.
HRMD	: Sent 2 questionnaires; 1 was completed & received whilst 1 was never returned.
PSICT	: Sent 2 questionnaires; 1 was completed and received whilst 1 was never returned.

Figure 17: Breakdown of questionnaires received or not received per branch

The breakdown of questionnaire in figure 12 highlights that; six **(6)** out of eight **(8)**, that is, 75% of the questionnaires sent out were completed by respondents and returned whilst two **(2)** out of eight **(8)**, that is, 25% was never returned and therefore assumed as never completed.

Furthermore, two of the *DPSA* Branches, namely *SDOT* and *Governance* completed and returned all of their allocated questionnaires. All the senior managers from the mentioned two branches who completed the questionnaires also participated in the preparatory meetings and the follow-up interviews.

Graph 1 below demonstrates that, only two **(2)** out of four **(4)** that is, 50% respondents from the Branches HRMD and PSICT completed and returned their questionnaires, whilst another **(2)** out of four **(4)**, 50% were never returned:

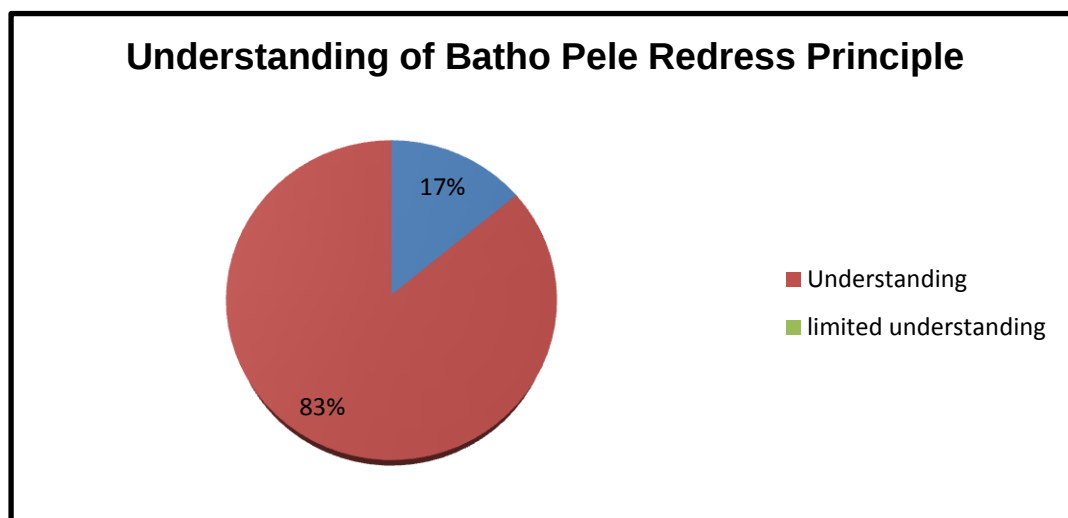


Graph 1: Questionnaires allocations and senior managers' responses per branch

4.2 Understanding of Redress principle

Majority of the respondents, five **(5)** out of six **(6)** that is, 83% senior managers who completed and returned the questionnaires from the Branches of SDOT, Governance and HRMD, indicated their understanding of the Redress principle.

Only one **(1)** of the six **(6)** that is 17% of the respondents, mainly from PSICT Branch indicated their limited understanding of redress principle as follows:



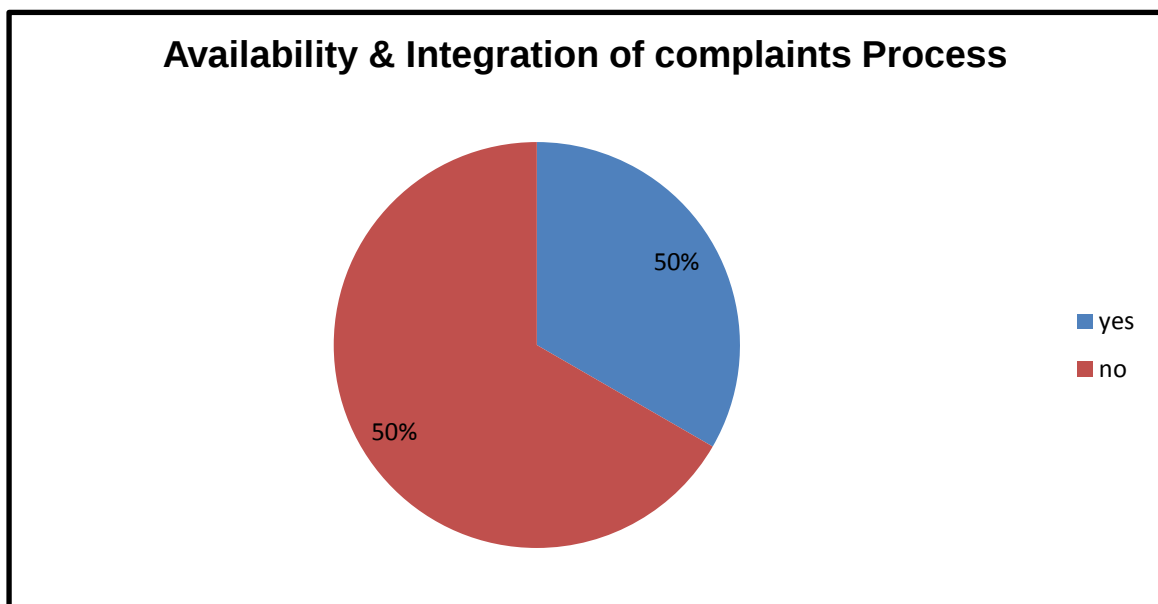
(Pie Chart 2: understanding & application of Redress)

4.3 Availability of the Complaints Handling for Redress

Although all six, 100% participants who responded across the four *DPSA* branches indicated their understanding and awareness of their expected responsibility to put citizens and/or beneficiaries first in service delivery initiatives by implementing redress; only 50% acknowledged their role and responsibilities in integrating and ensuring complaints handling mechanisms in their initiatives in their area of work.

Three **(3)** out of six **(6)**, 50% of the respondents from the Branches of SDOT and Governance responded **Yes** to the availability and integration of complaints handling in their work in compliance with the Redress Principle of *Batho Pele*.

Another three **(3)** out of six **(6)**, 50% from Branches of HRMD and PSICT responded **No** to the availability and integration thereof depicted in the Pie Chart 3 below:

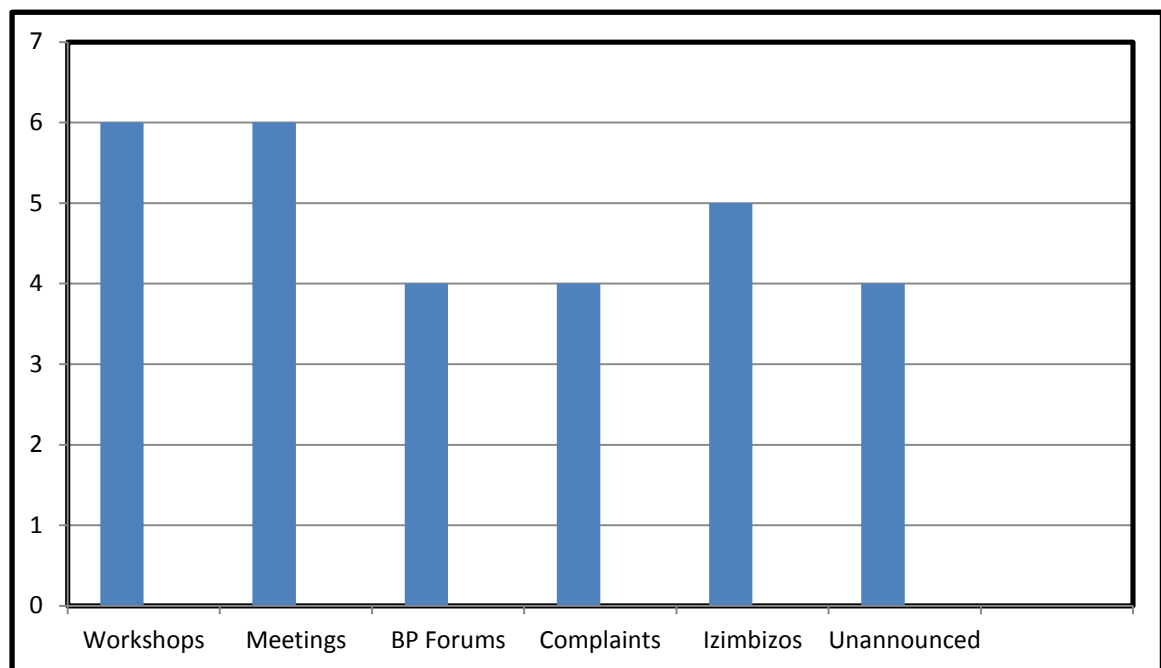


Pie Chart 3: Implementation of Redress through complaints handling mechanisms

4.4 Platforms of Redress Mechanisms Used

The findings on the usage of the redress and complaints management platforms highlighted that, the selection and usage of a particular mechanism differs from branch to branch and senior manager to senior manager depending on what the products and/or services are rendered, the target audience, and so on.

The responses are depicted in graph 3 as follows:



Graph 3: Redress and Complaints handling Platforms used

The various platforms of redress and complaints as highlighted in graph 3 as used by the respondents are further be elaborated as follows:

Workshops as a platform to deal with complaints

Six **(6)**, that is 100% of the respondents rated workshops as the most utilized form of redress to deal with service delivery complaints in their area of work.

Follow-up interviews of the respondents in this regard also highlighted that workshops are popular mechanisms, utilized when dealing with redress and complaints.

Meetings as a platform towards redress

Respondents also highlighted meeting platforms as used for redress by senior managers. Six **(6)**, that is 100% indicated that they utilise meetings to deal with service delivery complaints within their area of work.

Batho Pele Forums (BPF)

Four **(4)** out of six **(6)**, 67% mainly from the Branch: SDOT indicated to have used the *BPFs* platforms for redress and complaints handling against two **(2)** out of six **(6)**, 33% that have not.

Complaints and Compliments Boxes

Most of the respondents, five **(5)** of six **(6)**, that is 83%, highlighted their awareness and usage of the “suggestions/compliments boxes” as a platform for redress and handling complaints for both internal and external users in their area of work.

Izimbizos

Three **(3)** out of six **(6)**, 50%, indicated to have participated and utilised izimbizos against the other 50% that have never utilised this platform for redress and complaints handling.

Unannounced Visits

The least used method by the respondents is the unannounced visits to the identified service delivery points to listen and attend to challenges as highlighted by the service recipients.

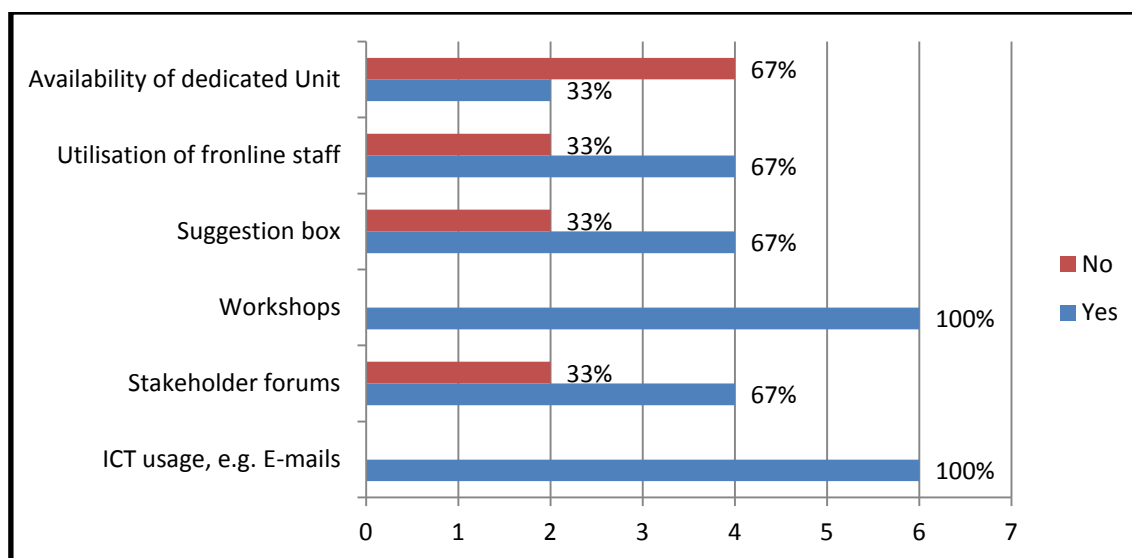
Two **(2)** out of six **(6)**, 33% mainly from the SDOT Branch utilise unannounced visit platform whilst four **(4)** out of six **(6)**, 67%, mainly from the Branches of HRMD, PSICT and Governance have not used it.

The explanation from the follow-up interview highlighted that the unannounced visits to the service delivery points are in most cases undertaken by the Executive Authorities accompanied by the senior managers coordinated by the SDOT Branch hence their high participation.

4.5 Complaints Handling Methods towards Redress Principle

The respondents across the four Branches, both in the structured questionnaire and follow-up interviews, highlighted the significance of well-structured complaints handling process and methods to deal with the complaints of beneficiaries in pursuit of the redress principle of *Batho Pele*.

The methods used are depicted as follows:



Graph 4: Critical elements for implementing Redress principle

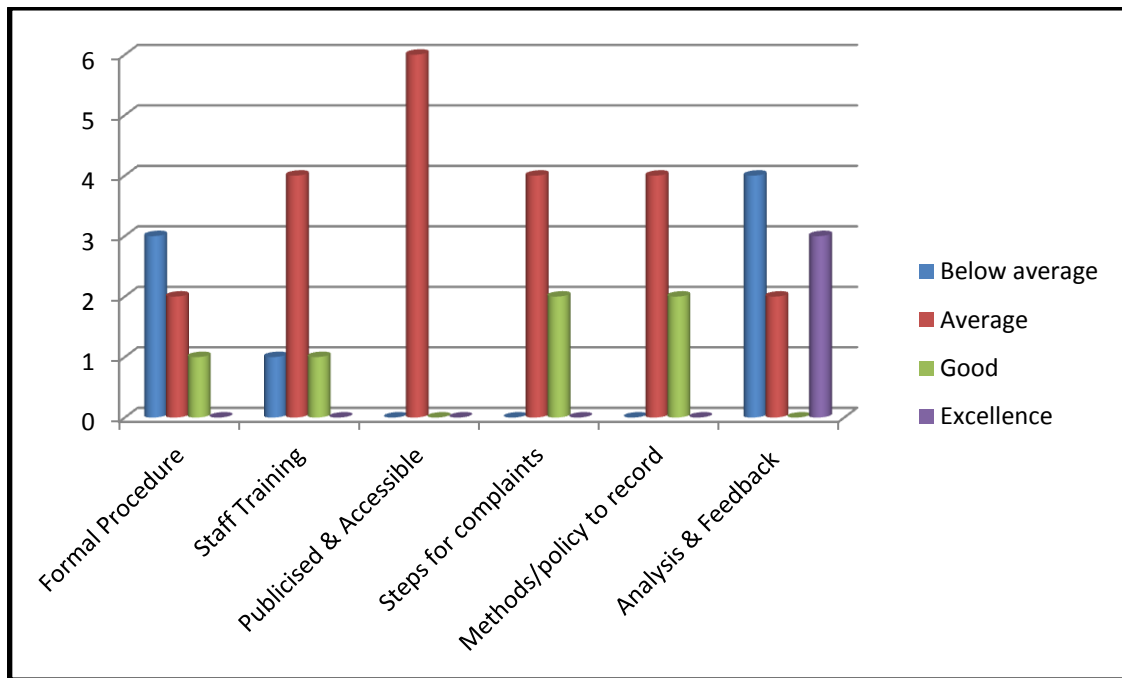
Based on the above, all the respondents' responded with **Yes** to workshops platform and utilisation of information technology as popular methods of redress in their area of work.

Four (4) out of six (6), 67% of the respondents highlighted their usage of stakeholder forums, suggestions/compliments boxes as critical methods against two (2) out of six (6), that is 33% said **No** to this question.

Only two (2) out of six (6), that 33% indicated **Yes** to the availability of a dedicated Unit dealing with complaints and redress mainly from the SDOT Branch four (4) of six (6) 67% mainly from the Branches of HRMD, Governance and PSICT.

4.6 Towards a sustainable Redress Mechanisms

The respondents across the four Branches highlighted their utilisation of the various key factors for a redress and complaints handling mechanisms on the scale ranging from below, average, good to excellent as follows:



Graph 5: Complaints Handling Methods and Procedure adapted from *BP Handbook: (2004)*

Formal Procedures as a key redress factor

Three **(3)** out of six **(6)**, 50% of the respondents, rated the availability of the formal complaints procedures within the department as below average, 33% rated average; whilst 17% rate as good and none for excellent.

Staff training and Empowerment on redress

One **(1)** out of six **(6)**, 17% of the respondents rated staff training and empowerment on redress within the *DPSA* below average, 67% as average against 17% which rated as good and none for excellent.

Publicised and accessible redress mechanisms

Only 17% of the respondents scored the “publicity and accessibility of redress and complaints handling” within the department as below average; 67% scored average, whilst 17% scored as good and zero **(0)** for excellent.

Steps to be followed for redress and complaints handling

Four **(4)** out of six **(6)**, 67%, rated steps for redress and complaints handling as average against 33% who scored the steps for complaints handling as good and none for excellent.

Record keeping methods, policy and procedure

Literature review emphasise the importance of an effective and efficient record and procedure management of the complaints to effect the redress principle to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Four **(4)** out of six **(6)**, 67%, rated the record keeping methods, policies and procedures as average; 33% rated as good and zero **(0)** for excellent.

Methods for analysis and feedback towards redress.

Four **(4)** out of six **(6)**, 67%, rated the methods for analysis and feedback as average, 33% scored it as good and zero **(0)** for excellent.

4.7 Conclusion

The respondents confirm the importance of redress and complaints handling to ensure continuous service delivery. The findings of the study highlighted the understanding of redress, different mechanisms and platforms used, the success factors critical to ensure successful integration and alignment and different available methods.

Findings further pointed out to the importance to strengthen the systematic development, integration, implementation, monitoring towards sustainable redress and complaints handling; which include; meetings; workshops and *Batho Pele* Forums among others.

CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction:

The findings in Chapter four highlighted the need for senior managers to put in place some form of redress and complaints handling to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and citizen satisfaction in service delivery.

5.2 Understanding and Availability of the Complaints Handling for Redress

The senior managers within the public service as drivers of service delivery transformation initiatives and programmes are expected to demonstrate knowledge and the integration of the redress and complaint mechanism within their areas of work.

The findings of the study suggest that, although there is a general understanding and awareness of the significance *Batho Pele* Principles and the intent of its revitalisation towards service delivery improvement, more work is still required for managers within the public service to integrated redress and complaint handling processes and systems as an integral part of their work towards continuous service delivery improvement.

The prevalent understanding and implementation of redress mechanisms is mostly in the context of suggestion boxes, meetings and workshops as highlighted by the respondent from various *DPSA* branches, however, these are not guided by systematic processes and procedures as highlighted by the literature review and the legislative framework.

Continuous improvements are required from senior managers to the minimal follow-up, monitoring and evaluation on redress and complaints in a systematic manner to ensure continuous improvement in the provision of services.

5.3 Processes, Tools, Techniques & Steps Towards Redress and Complaints

Senior managers within the *DPSA* still need to do more to ensure that processes, tools and techniques are in place for redress in the context of *Batho Pele* in the public service.

Literature review and the research findings of this study suggest the significance of processes and steps followed in dealing with redress are mapped out and every official within the *DPSA* get appraised accordingly. Among other things, the formal mapped out methodology for analysis and providing feedback to the beneficiaries to redress and complaints is critical to strengthen the credibility and the confidence of both the internal employees and citizens on the redress and complaints mechanisms put in place by the senior managers in this regard.

Redress and complaints mechanisms, tools and procedures to redress the unmet service delivery expectations should include an apology to the citizen, an explanation of what happened in a simple manner, which may include among others, explanation in the language that a citizen understand; and the information on how the problem will be resolved to avoid similar future recurrences.

5.4 Techniques, Platforms, Training & orientation for redress and complaints.

Senior managers should strive towards consistency in the understanding, implementation, and application of redress and complaints through various platforms, tools and training to ensure consistency and continuous improvement in implementation.

Workshops and meetings are viewed as critical platforms for redress as confirmed by most respondents of this study. Improvement measures should continuously be taken to make these more responsive and better through awareness creation, communication and interaction with citizens.

Batho Pele forum remains a strategic platform and vehicle to afford managers an opportunity to be open and transparent to reflect on implementation, challenges and possible solutions for the redress principle. The forum also provides a

platform for managers to share lessons learnt best practices and possible proposals for replication and decision-making.

Most senior managers in this study highlighted the need to respond to the challenges in establishing, implementing and sustaining the Batho Pele Forum as a vehicle for redress, and complaints handling continued to be experienced by senior managers.

The sustainability elements for *Batho Pele* Forums in advancing the Batho Pele initiative integrating redress principles across the public service should include:

SIGNIFICANCE OF BATHO PELE FORUMS FOR REDRESS

Batho Pele Forums across the Public Service. It should be a routine event with clear facilitation and coordination rules to ground the debates and conversations and be collegial.

Provide opportunity for diverse discussions, lessons and best practices based on the Batho Pele initiatives, and in particular, Redress as a focus of this study.

Usage of qualitative knowledge identifying failure, successes and possible solutions.

Taking advantage of experiential knowledge and skills on processes and systems which explain success, failure and possible innovation

FIGURE 18: Sustainability Elements for BPFs (Moyonihan, 2008, as adapted)

5.5 Collaboration, Implementation and Monitoring towards sustainable redress

The findings pointed out the significance of senior managers ensuring an integrated and collaborative approach, partnership with various stakeholders and leadership by senior management in support of implementation, monitoring, evaluation and feedback towards meaningful redress in line with *Batho Pele*.

The sustainable mechanisms are central for the implementation of the *Batho Pele* Redress principle. The different methods of complaints handling mechanisms to redress are some of the critical factors towards service delivery improvement and citizen satisfaction within the public service, as highlighted by the research.

Chi-Kuang Chen, An-Jin Shie and Chang-His Yu (2012: 786-972) and Davidow (2000), as confirmed by the literature review and respondents of this study, suggest the following redress and complaints dimensions critical for sustainability for service delivery improvement initiatives in the public service:

DIMENSION	KEY REDRESS ISSUE
TIMELINESS	Timeliness is a critical dimension towards Citizens and/or beneficiaries' satisfaction in redress. The significance of managers within the public service to prioritise timeliness to be an integral part of the redress and compliance handling measures in their area of work.
FACILITATE	The need to facilitate and coordinate a working environment that emphasises the significance of redress and complaints handling in the event of an aggrieved beneficiary is likely to decrease citizen dissatisfaction.
APOLOGY	Managers need to create space and opportunities for a genuine apology to deal with redress and complaints within their areas of work, especially in the frontline. Integrating apology dimension in the redress followed by an open and transparent explanation of what happened and how it will be resolved is likely to improve citizens' satisfaction in an unmet promise and or expectation standard in service delivery.
CREDIBLE	Mechanisms put in place to deal with redress should be credible to command that respect and confidence on the side of the beneficiary.
ATTENTIVE	Managers should view attentiveness as key in dealing with redress measures and this should be an integral part of ongoing training and orientation, especially for frontline workers.
REDRESS	The need for a formal process that is known to both the internal and external stakeholders of how to deal with Redress within the work space and the public service at large.

Table 2: Davidow (2000) Redress dimensions adapted for the study

Analysis and feedback will assist with the identification of gaps and challenges identified whilst pointing out the areas of improvement in service delivery with redress. The above will also assist with the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the redress mechanisms which will lead to the areas of improvement both in awareness creation and utilisation.

5.6 Training, awareness and communication to Redress in Public Service

Senior managers as drivers of redress and complaints in the department should invest more in the training and empowering of the different categories of employees, especially the frontline staff, about the redress mechanisms and how these operate to ensure uniformity; consistency; efficiency and effectiveness.

Training and empowerment in this regard will assist and empower employees to deal with redress and complaints raised by citizens with courtesy, dignity, sensitivity and respect to bring about the desired resolution.

Training in the key issues and processes include documenting and collating of the complaints and redress representing the voice of the beneficiaries. Translation of the complaints and redress issues into problems and demands, the analysis and resolution of the complaints and problems received.

5.7 Communication, Publicised and accessible redress mechanisms

One of the key guiding principles of an effective and efficient complaints handling mechanism is one that is accessible and well publicised for both the internal and external users.

Senior managers within the DPSA, and the public service at large, should ensure the integration of redress and complaints to the service delivery improvement which incorporates easily accessible, consulted, publicised and communicated service standards that are simple, measureable, articulate, realistic and time-bound.

5.8 Conclusion

The overall analysis of this research study pointed out that the need for senior managers within the public service departments should integrate the redress and complaints handling in their service delivery implementation, monitor and feedback with emphasis placed on accessibility, fairness, responsiveness and confidentiality.

The overall evaluation of the department's redress and complaint resolution process still required systematic measures and procedures towards implementing redress and complaints handling to be strengthened and taken seriously within the public service.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The evolving and maturity of redress machinery against citizens who better understand their rights and responsibilities, defines new challenges for future research and studies for senior managers to explore challenges for implementation, monitoring and reporting on *Batho Pele* service delivery transformation initiatives in order to achieve the policy intent of putting “People First” within the public service. Redressing citizens and/or beneficiaries complaints and dissatisfaction is critical for continuous service delivery improvement within the public service.

Understanding and Availability of the Complaints Handling for Redress

Clear understanding at senior management level that Batho Pele and therefore, redress is a service delivery improvement policy position of government, and as such, senior managers should strive towards putting in place measures to improve on establishment/development, implementation, monitoring and feedback of citizen complaints.

The above include putting in place tools, techniques and initiatives to improve implementation, for example, a step-by-step process to improve implementing and integrating of the redress principle of *Batho Pele* within the department.

Processes, Tools, Techniques & Steps Towards Redress and Complaints

Senior managers, as the key stakeholders in the service delivery value chain should put in place systematic, procedural and responsive redress mechanisms which should be accessible, informative, well communicated and popularised with advocacy initiatives articulating citizens’ rights and responsibilities in the event of an unmet promised/expected service standard.

Tools, techniques and initiatives in support of the redress Implementation, monitoring and reporting should be supported internally through training and

orientation of the public servants, especially the frontline officials, and externally to ensure effective and efficient implementation and the correct culture orientation of putting people first.

Strengthening implementation, monitoring and communication to redress

The introduction of monitoring and evaluation capability with clear indicators to deal with the redress within the department; this should ensure structured follow-up, feedback to the complainants and all these should also be part of the service delivery plan of the department.

Development and implementation of the communication plan to inform the *DPSA* beneficiaries both internally and externally on how the redress mechanisms of the department operate, as well as expectations, roles and responsibilities.

Sustainable implementation of redress & complaints: Lessons learnt

In order to support implementation, monitoring and reporting on redress mechanisms to ensure citizens' satisfaction and continuous improvement in service delivery initiatives, senior managers should put in place effective documentation, packaging and sharing of the lessons learnt and best practices on redress and complaints handling mechanisms in this regard to ensure continuous improvement on redress with a view to ensure citizen satisfaction.

Lessons learnt should further facilitate the development and formulation of responsive models, tools and frameworks for redress and implementation thereof. These models will facilitate and serve as a reference towards setting up of a redress and complaints mechanism within the public service. The process should also include identification, documentation, packaging, sharing and, where possible, replication of best practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are the recommendations from the study to the *DPSA* in strengthening its implementation of the redress principle of the *Batho Pele*: 1997:

Continued strengthening of future considerations to integrate redress and complaints handling in service delivery through responsive resources in terms of tools, techniques, skills, knowledge and capacities to respond to citizen/beneficiary complaints in the event of unmet service standards

Ongoing strengthening of the integration and implementation of the redress *Batho Pele* principle through improved processes, documentation and a communicated implementation plan which is resourced with the correct skills, knowledge, competencies and budget.

Strengthening of monitoring and feedback, through tools/techniques, knowledge, competencies and culture orientation through integrated redress mechanisms by the public servants as service providers, and the citizens/ beneficiaries in terms of their rights and responsibilities in the service delivery value chain.

Senior managers to leverage on the gains made and best practices on the implementation of the popular redress mechanisms highlighted in the study which include suggestion boxes, meetings and workshops among others.

Effective and efficient document management procedure for records keeping, follow-ups, packaging, sharing and replication of best practices through different service delivery platforms, some mentioned in the study to strengthen delivery by curbing possible duplications and wastages whilst ensuring value for money.

Senior managers should further ensure that the redress mechanism should be informed by quality, speed, dependability, flexibility and costs towards citizen satisfaction, improvement of internal processes, increased morale and professionalism.

Leverage on lessons learnt should facilitate the development and formulation of responsive models, tools and frameworks for redress and implementation thereof. These should include identification, documentation, packaging, sharing and where possible, replication of best practices.

The need to broadening the sample size to explore the extent of the challenges facing the implementation of the Redress Principle across the public service, and the impact thereof on the citizens'/beneficiaries satisfaction with service delivery.

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